



Thursday, November 9, 2017

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RAT-RUN RACERS FACE CRACKDOWN

Report by Jamie Brasington

A CAMPAIGN has been launched to tackle speeding on a Halesowen 'rat run' where it is feared that someone could be killed if measures are not taken.

Drivers are flouting the speed limit on Lutley Lane, which has a nursery on its route.

Councillor Andrea Goddard wants to install speed bumps to curb speeding. She said: "I believe there could be a fatality. People are using the road as a rat run."

"What concerns me is there is a nursery on the road. I'm worried a small child could be hit by a car. The speeding is dreadful."

"Residents have raised concerns with me and some have reported accidents."

Councillor Goddard, who represents Hayley Green and Cradley South ward on Dudley Council, wants to see 'wires' placed on the road to monitor speeding.

She says speeding has been going on for years but is worried that it has got worse.

She is proposing that speed bumps could be installed to stop motorists breaking the law, but admitted that was a 'difficult' task.

She said: "Although I want to please everybody, I think people's safety is important."

A consultation with residents would be held before any safety action is taken, she added.

Horrendous

Melissa Rexworthy, who runs Tiger Lily Day Nursery on Lutley Lane, said: "The speeding is absolutely horrendous. Drivers are not speeding at 40mph, but at 60mph and 70mph."

"It is an accident waiting to happen."

Lutley Lane has a 30mph speed limit along some of the road and then 60mph.

Speeding was also highlighted by fellow ward councillor Jeff Hill, who said HGVs often 'raced down' Lutley Lane.

"Speeding is problem and there are a number of issues," he said. "The size of vehicles is another. Although the road has a weight restriction, that does get ignored and the road is unsuitable with HGVs racing down there."

Lutley Lane takes a considerable amount of traffic between Hayley Green and Stourbridge.

Councillor Hill said it wasn't the only road in the area with a speeding problem, citing Portsdown Road. "People are often driving up and down there at ridiculous speed," he said.

"I have raised this with the council and they will be doing a traffic survey."

CHARITY OFFERS HELP TO BLIND VETERANS



National Service veteran Trevor Wellings, aged 78, with wife Carol, from Halesowen, has been helped by Blind Veterans UK

A BLIND ex-serviceman from Halesowen is backing Blind Veterans UK's campaign to spread awareness of its charitable services ahead of Remembrance Sunday.

Trevor Wellings, aged 78, who did National Service, has received support from the charity and wants other blind ex-servicemen to know help is out there.

New research from the charity has revealed 61 per cent of men, and 47 per cent of women, do not consider themselves a veteran despite having done National Service.

Trevor said: "I think it's important that those who did National Service realise that

they are eligible for the support of charities like Blind Veterans UK.

"Thanks to the charity I've been given equipment like a laptop with special software for people with a vision impairment, a colour detector device that helps me coordinate my clothes and a kettle that pours one mug of tea so I don't scald myself."

"These small things have really changed my life on a day-to-day basis."

Trevor lost his eyesight in 2001 through due to diabetic retinopathy where he suffered bleeding behind the eyes.

He had been called up for National Service

aged 19 in 1958. He joined the Worcestershire Regiment where he was posted to Jamaica and worked as a driver.

He was demobbed in 1960 and worked as a mechanic and in building conservation.

Blind Veterans UK's Chief Executive, Major General Nick Caplin CB said: "At Blind Veterans UK, we want to send out the message loud and clear that whenever you served and however you lost your sight, you're a veteran to us and deserving of our support."

For more information, call the charity on 0800 389 7979 or visit the blindveterans.org.uk website.

FUNDING

Chiefs warn fire service faces crisis

WEST Midlands fire chiefs have issued a stark warning to Westminster that the service is at 'tipping point' as cuts bite deeper.

Chief Fire Officer Phil Loach, and Councillor John Edwards, chair of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority, spelled out the dangers at a meeting with prominent MPs at Westminster.

They forecast that engine response times and vital prevention and protection work could be at risk.

HERITAGE

Canal network overhaul starting

AN £850,000 overhaul of canals in the West Midlands is set to get under way, including work on Parkhead Top Lock near Dudley.

The Canal & River Trust is beginning the revamp across Birmingham and the Black Country as part of a five-month winter maintenance programme.

The works, taking place until late February, will see craftsmen repairing historic canal walls, locks and bridges.

EVENT

X Factor girl band to switch on lights

CHRISTMAS lights will be switched on in Halesowen next Saturday, November 18.

Festive events will take place in the town centre throughout the day, including a live performance from X Factor's New Dynamix. There will also be a festive market and free parking.

Elsewhere in the Dudley borough, Coronation Street actor Antony Cotton, who plays Sean Tully, will switch on Stourbridge Christmas lights on November 25, including a meet and greet at Ryemarket.

INSIDE

LISA BACKING FEED A FAMILY



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EDITORIAL:
Tel: 01384 353201/01384 353205
E-mail: dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

SPORTS:
Tel: 01902 319453
E-mail: chron.sport@expressandstar.co.uk

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Where to drop off your contributions

ALL your donations to the Express & Star's Feed A Family This Christmas appeal will be shared out between food banks and other charitable organisations across the Black Country and Staffordshire.

We are asking for seasonal treats such as mince pies, chocolates and Christmas puddings, as well as basics including canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, pasta and rice.

We just ask that festive food has a

best before date of the end of January. Non-food items such as toiletries, new socks and small gifts will also be gratefully received.

The good causes we will be supporting again this year include The Well (Home of Wolverhampton Food Bank).

We are also helping the Good Shepherd Ministry, based in Wolverhampton, and the Black Country Food Bank, which has centres across

Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall. Other groups include Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also be supporting The Haven which provides support services to women and children who are affected by domestic violence and homelessness.

The drop-off points are: Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ES; Express &

Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA; Oldbury office: Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG; Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4JN; The Midcounties Co-operative Food Store Codsall, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Codsall WV8 1DB. Donations dropped off here will go to The Well.

Further donation points may be confirmed in the coming weeks.

Give vital gift of help for struggling families



FROM single mothers knowing there is nothing in the cupboard for tea to workers who suddenly find themselves out of a job – food banks are a vital lifeline.

Many have seen the number of people turning to them for help continue to rise with unemployment, changes to benefits and low wages all playing a part.

And, at this time of year, many are also faced with the heart-breaking choice of either putting food on the table or heating their home.

We have teamed up with sister daily the Express & Star to launch the Feed A Family This Christmas appeal to support the food banks.

The appeal was a huge success last year collecting 9,000 items for food banks, the homeless and children at The Haven refuge.

From now until December 16, we are collecting contributions of non-perishable food and toiletries as well as socks and hats.

The good causes we are supporting are The Well (Home of Wolverhampton Food Bank), the Good Shepherd Ministry, based in Wolverhampton, the Black Country Food Bank, which has centres across Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall, Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also be supporting The Haven which supports women and children who are affected by domestic violence and homelessness.



Loading up the vans – food being transported to where it is needed



Lisa Riley, who will be appearing in Jack and The Beanstalk at Wolverhampton Grand, is backing the campaign

Former Emmerdale star Lisa Riley, who will be appearing in Jack and The Beanstalk at Wolverhampton Grand, is backing the campaign.

She said: "I think this is fantastic. There are so many people who need a lot. We can come together as a community and do that extra bit for people even if it's tin of beans."

All of the organisations that will benefit from Feed A Family This Christmas are helping people in need every day. The Black Country Food Bank saw a 12 per cent in-

crease in demand between August 2016 and this August.

"The roll out of Universal Credit has had an impact. People are waiting up to six weeks for their benefits and they are already in debt by the time they get that first payment," a spokeswoman said. "We've seen an increase in homelessness too."

The Well in Wolverhampton continues to provide food and toiletries to more than 7,500 people a year. While Cannock and District Food Bank has also seen an increase,

helping 3,634 people in 2016/17, up from 2,676 in 2015/16.

Walsall North Food Bank, which is based at Pelsall Methodist Church, helped more than 450 extra people in 2016/17.

Group head of weekly titles Diane Davies said: "We were overwhelmed by the amazing response we received from our communities last year. This year we have seen increasing demand on food banks. Please help us to make a difference to people in need in our communities."

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Centres on right road after buses are sold off

TWO day centres for the elderly have been given a new lease of life after the sale of four minibuses raised £20,000.

The Age Concern-run Elton Day Care Centre in Stourbridge and Green Lane Day Centre in Halesowen have been kept running by the sales, which saw three minibuses sold to charity and another sold at auction for £2,700.

It follows Age Concern's departure from the Mary Stevens Day Centre in Stourbridge after funding from Dudley Council was removed in April.

Chief officer Dionne Legge said: "We are still here serving the elderly in the Dudley borough. Since we have come out of Mary Stevens Day Centre I think people thought the whole of Age Concern had closed down."

"We have a fantastic service in the Elton Centre and we're still offering daycare five days a week but it's not located in Halesowen. We're a smaller organisation, we have had to slim down but we're still trying to carry on."

"The minibuses were probably worth more but we don't feel hard done by, we accept that with happiness. Three of them went to charities with one of those to Age UK Dudley and another to Hall Flyers in Wombourne. The fourth and oldest one went to auction."

Age Concern lost more than £21,000 a year in funding.

Work to resume at chicken plant

A SCANDAL-HIT chicken processing factory in West Bromwich will restart production this week.

The firm 2 Sisters says there will be increased oversight of the 850-strong workforce, which has been undergoing retraining in the wake of revelations over hygiene breaches at the Dial Lane site, which made national headlines.

Customers including Tesco, Marks & Spencer and Aldi say they are happy with measures taken by the company and will take products from them again.

The Food Standards Agency will now be on the site 'at all times' and CCTV coverage of operations inside the factory will be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Festive brewing

A BREWERY in Blackheath is hosting its own Christmas beer festival.

The festival will be held at the Fixed Wheel Brewery on Long Lane Trading Estate from November 30 to December 3

Zena backs outdoor charity challenge



Zena and her team on top of Snowdon

SPORTS therapist Zena Worrall, from Romsley, is raising money for a charity that helps young people experience the great outdoors, in memory of her partner who lost his battle with cancer.

Zena first got involved with Climbing Out with her partner Kevin Gleghill, who wanted to fund one of these courses. Kevin died last year at the age of 62.

She is asking for help to raise £6,000 for the charity in memory of Kevin, who she met through the charity.

"We aim to give the young people

what can be a life changing experience, providing a fantastic opportunity to meet new friends and have adventures they would never have thought possible.

"The challenges give them the confidence to try new things and have a more positive approach to life."

So far she has raised £4,000 towards her target.

The charity runs five day courses of outdoor activities for 16 to 30-year-olds, including many amputees or cancer sufferers.

Injuries

Mr Gleghill campaigned to fund outdoor challenges for young people with life changing injuries or illnesses.

Zena said: "I am so glad I can continue Kevin's work, either by volunteering, walking or fundraising."

Cradley Heath revamp signals brighter future

A HIGH Street in the heart of the Black Country is set to be transformed in a bid to boost shoppers and trade, under plans by a London-based property group.

Bosses from Oyster, which owns most of Cradley Heath High Street, says it has ploughed thousands of pounds into the area in recent months.

It has promised that all 22 shops they own on the High Street and precinct will be rented out by the start of next year.

Finishing touches are also being put to the flats above, which are set to go on the market for around £70,000 each.

The former market hall could be turned into a Home Bargains store.

A spokesman for Oyster Properties said: "We are hoping that by the start of next year every shop will be rented out. It is an exciting time."

"We are working in stages to make sure that we attract more traders and younger families. There will be 21 new flats on top of the shops which we are conscious to be as affordable housing under the help to buy scheme. These will be finished by the end of this year."

Improved

"Footfall has improved greatly recently with the arrival of new tenants and we want to continue with that. Stage two will be looking at the former market hall. Therefore whatever comes there has to be a viable solution. The ultimate scenario would be to have a Home Bargains store."

"We want the best for the town and for it to continue to get bigger and better."

Among tenants to snap up the shops are a gym, beautician, fruit and vegetable stall, jewellery shop and cafe.

Gary Link, from fishmongers Pier 39 inside the precinct, said the future was looking brighter. He added: "In the last few weeks we have had more potential traders come and view the shops than we have had in the last few months. I have heard that a lot of people are interested in moving to Cradley Heath, which is great news."

Worker survives under tons of food



Rescuers spent four hours attempting to reach the trapped worker. Picture: @TechRescueWMFS

Emergency crews have been praised for their swift actions by a firm in Cradley after an employee driving a forklift truck became trapped under a pile of refrigerated goods in a warehouse.

A four hour rescue operation was held to free the 54-year-old man at Central Supplies in Salt-

brook Road. He and the forklift had been completely buried in an avalanche of stored goods. Dudley Council is now investigating.

A spokesman for the firm said: "We are very grateful for the swift reactions of the fire and ambulance services and his work colleagues. We are also pleased to

hear that the individual involved has been released from hospital."

Fire crews from Haden Cross and Stourbridge together with the West Midland Fire Service Technical Rescue team led the delicate operation, which saw rescuers moving items so a shift of goods did not crush the trapped man.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MP urging folks to get free flu jab

MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis James Morris is calling on eligible constituents to get their free flu vaccine jab before winter sets in.

Mr Morris said: "Getting the flu can be bad enough for even the fittest of us, but for older people and those with long-term conditions it can cause serious health problems. Getting the flu jab is free and easy, and offers the best chance of avoiding the flu. I'd therefore urge all those eligible – including all care home staff for the first time – to speak to your GP or local pharmacist and get your vaccination booked."

Visit www.nhs.uk/staywell for more information.

School gets £1k breakfast boost

A SCHOOL has received a £1,000 grant to help increase breakfast club services.

The cash has been given by Kellogg's to the Whiteheath Education Centre in Hawes Lane, Blackheath, to help them to provide better services to youngsters at early-morning sessions.

Headteacher Lesley Yates said: "We are so grateful to receive this generous donation. We have since been able to purchase equipment and breakfast ingredients for our club. These resources will help us to provide our services for our children and their families."

Classic cars will be motoring in

THOUSANDS of classic car enthusiasts are descending on the NEC as a major event returns to the West Midlands.

More than 2,500 cars and motorbikes will be on display at the Classic Motor Show, running from Friday to Sunday, covering an area the size of 12 football pitches.

It is the largest show of its kind in the UK and is always popular with motoring fans.

For more information and to book tickets from £23.50 visit www.necclassicmotorshow.com.

Woman is injured in collision at junction

A WOMAN in her 20s was left trapped in a car and suffered minor leg injuries after a two-car crash in Halesowen on Tuesday afternoon.

The accident took place at the junction of Springfield Road and Long Lane at around 4.50pm.

An ambulance service spokesman said: "It is believed the patient was trapped and had to be cut free by the fire service. She had back pain and minor leg injuries."

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Partially sighted death crash driver is given prison sentence

A DRIVER from Dudley who killed a pedestrian while either too proud or frightened to admit his sight was failing has been jailed for three years.

Peter Scriven, aged 60, was blind in one eye and had reduced sight in the other. He did not see Arthur Fletcher crossing the road in the dark with heavy rain falling, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The recently retired 65-year-old was near the centre of Priory Road, Dudley, when hit by the Nissan and thrown into the opposite carriageway where he was struck by another vehicle, said Mr Thomas Schofield, prosecuting.

The defendant, who had kept his sight problem secret from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA), did not know what he had hit and failed to stop. He returned to the scene once he realised the extent of damage to his car, which had been travelling at between 20 and 24 mph during the accident on December 10.

Tests had shown that Scriven could not read the registration number of a vehicle when more than three metres away. The minimum requirement for a motorist is 20 metres.

Blind

Scriven was diagnosed as blind in the left eye in 2002 and the sight of the right was deteriorating but this was not disclosed to the DVLA.

Mr Alexander Stein, defending, said: "He had not seen an optician because he was terrified of being told he was going completely blind."

When he finally went recently he heard the sight of his right eye could be restored by cataract surgery.

Scriven, of Forrest Road, pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving, was jailed and given a three-and-a-half-year driving ban.

The Wolverhampton-based company said the first will see it spruce up existing track and infrastructure on the route from London to Corby, which will generate £62m of revenue.

A separate deal through Carillion Powerlines, a joint venture firm, will see work to complete the electrification of the same route. This contract is expected to generate £260m.

Carillion has been thrown into crisis since a July trading update sent shares tumbling by more than 70 per cent in one week.

Health boss Toby Lewis, chief executive of Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, says he remains confident the Midland Metropolitan Hospital, currently being built in Smethwick by Carillion, is not at risk.

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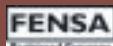
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Deal to save Brierley Hill landmark civic venue

VOLUNTEERS are poised to take over the running of Brierley Hill Civic Hall securing its future and saving the council £100,000-a-year.

It will see keys to the 695-seat venue handed over to Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).

The charity has been managing the venue for the last 18 months on a trial. Now Dudley Council says it has shown that it can make a success of it.

Before the charity took control of the hall – a thriving venue in the 1960s to 80s – it had become under-used and was often shut during the day.

But CVS has built new relationships with existing users, schools, colleges, voluntary organisations, promoters, artists, businesses and entertainers.

Events such as the Live at the Civic comedy nights have been popular bringing hundreds of people back through the doors of the Bank Street venue to see such major TV comedy stars as Ross Noble and Seann Walsh perform.

Now Dudley Council chiefs have recommended the hall and its land is transferred to the CVS to run day-to-day in a 'community asset transfer'.

James Challis, from the CVS and civic hall general manager, said: "From a CVS point of view it was very important we did our utmost to keep the venue open."

"We had heard rumblings that there was potential for the site to close and that would have been such a shame."

Regeneration boss Councillor Ian Kettle said: "Brierley Hill Civic Hall currently costs the council in excess of £100,000 a year to run. As a charitable organisation, Dudley CVS is eligible for funding streams to which the council does not have access."

Boris plays a blinder at business event



Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson donned a cap and declared himself a Peaky Blinders fan when he met Chris Lamb of Sadler's brewery at Westminster

BORIS Johnson hailed the Black Country's proud manufacturing heritage and its move into hi-tech sectors at the region's annual showcase in the Houses of Parliament.

Nearly 30 companies put their goods on display for MPs at the event, organised by Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

Foreign Secretary Mr Johnson was among those to pop in, chatting with bosses and looking at the wide range of products on display.

Products ranged from traditional handmade ironwork by Kirkpatrick in Walsall to alloy wheels from West Bromwich's Rimstock.

Brewery

Mr Johnson, who once worked as a journalist at the Express & Star, also visited a stand for Ley's Sadler's brewery, which among its beers makes a Peaky Blinders ale named after the hit TV drama.

Mr Johnson said: "I spent part of my early working career in Wolverhampton and I remember all the traditional industries in the Black Country, so it's fantastic to see so many businesses in advanced manufacturing such as aerospace, automotive, digital media and film production."

Other businesses represented included Boss Designs in Dudley and Wolverhampton-based learning provider LearnPlay Foundation.

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Tributes to young father who died in bridge fall

A FATHER has paid tribute to his son from Dudley, who died after falling from a bridge in.

Chris Brookes, aged 22, was found with head injuries in a bus lane on the Wolverhampton Ring Road during the early hours of October 29.

Police believe he fell from the footbridge, between the city's rail and bus stations, and his death is not being treated as suspicious.

Mr Brookes was a general assembler at Elta Fans in Kingswinford. He has one daughter, three-year-old Layla Jade, and his partner Sarah Jayne is expecting the couple's first child together in January. She says the boy will be named Chris Junior.

Mr Brookes' father Philip said: "He was loved so much by his friends and family. He's left a big hole in our hearts - we are all devastated by what happened."

"We have been inundated with people wanting to pay their respects."

"A JustGiving page is live on Facebook and I would like to thank people for their donations."

Within 24 hours the page had nearly hit its £3,000 target. The aim is to 'get something made for remembrance' of Mr Brookes.

A statement on the site says: "Nothing will bring Chris back but he loved his family so much and this is a little way of us showing our support at a terrible time for all his family."



Chris Brookes

Fewer parents in Dudley are hit with school holiday fines

Rolling out ideas for future of town park

YOUNG people have been consulted about their ideas to improve the facilities in Britannia Park in Rowley Regis.

They were asked their views at an event involving Sandwell Council and the Friends of Britannia Park.

Councillors Syeda Khatun and Simon Hackett popped in with officers to a skateboarding contest in the park.

"It was a very worthwhile event and it was good to be able to listen to the views of local young people because we want to take them into account when we plan improvements," said deputy leader Councillor Khatun. She added: "There is also the hope that it will generate a sense of ownership of the park."

Councillor Hackett, cabinet member for children's services, said: "It is important to get along to events like this and engage with younger members of the public and to keep their views in mind when we discuss possible improvements in the future."

The skateboarding competition was backed with a £350 Youth Offer grant from the Rowley Local funding and was organised by the council's young people's services, Rowley CANDO.



Councillors with youngsters and the Friends of Britannia Park in Rowley Regis

PARENTS have been hit by more than £1 million in fines for taking their children on school term time holidays.

The figures were revealed as Dudley Council's leader called on headteachers to use more 'discretion' to help cash-strapped parents.

Figures released last week show discrepancies between councils for the amount of fines collected - with Walsall Council picking up almost £230,000, Wolverhampton around £128,000 and Dudley just £44,000.

More than 22,000 parents have been issued with the £60 charge over the last five years in the West Midlands, with another 2,000 being taken to court because of their child's low attendance.

Figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act show Walsall Council has collected £227,310 in fines since 2012/13. Wolverhampton council made £128,200, Dudley £44,100, and Sandwell £39,120. Staffordshire County Council collected £102,080 over the past two years.

Grabbing

Sandwell council took 817 parents to court since 2012/13 rather than issue fixed penalties. Fines collected in court rather than through fixed penalty notices go to the Ministry of Justice instead of the council.

The councils were described as carrying out 'scandalous money grabbing' by West Midland Liberal Democrat campaigner Sarah Quaraby, who compiled the data after submitting the FOI request. She demanded more flexible arrangements to help parents.

Patrick Harley, leader of Dudley Council, said authorities had to enforce the law but called on headteachers to use 'discretion'. He said: "We understand the financial pressures on parents taking children on holiday during half term and school holidays."

Sadler's to invest £1m in brewery

A BLACK Country brewery is to quadruple its production with fresh investment of more than £1 million.

The new brewery at Sadler's in Lye is due to be up and running by the end of January. Managing director Chris Sadler has also revealed plans for the business to open a new series of bars across the Black Country.

Sadler's will keep the existing brewery at its base at Conyers Trading Estate for producing experimental ranges of its beers.

Mr Sadler said the major investment would also involve adding a 'speakeasy' room, to open later this month, and viewing gallery at the brewery. "We will be able to produce up to 1,000 brewers' barrels a week, equivalent to about 300,000 pints of beer," he explained.

The investment has been driven by growing demand for its ales, particularly its popular Peaky Blinders beer.

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Price rise that leaves consumer smarting

MY bill from British Gas has just landed on the doormat, covering the period when the company we all love to hate imposed its extortionate 15 per cent price rise?

Interestingly, while the latest reading was taken from the "smart meter", which gives exact readings by remote control, the company still found it necessary to estimate how much gas and electricity I had used before September 1, when the new charges came into force. Now if these meters are so smart, why couldn't they have provided an accurate reading for the amount of energy used before the rise?

I have no idea how accurate the estimate was – like a lot of you, I don't have the time to sit there staring at the little black box to keep tabs on how much power the washing machine consumes on its fast spin cycle. But I would be very surprised if the estimate did not work in British Gas's favour. It's funny how these new smart meters tend to be at their smartest when it benefits the energy company.

■ ■ ■

THE late 1980s were about as good as life in this country got. Sharp suits, fast cars and decent television programmes, a time when we had everything we needed – when a giant mobile phone was a harmless gimmick rather than something which turned youngsters into zombies.

But for all the great things came out of that decade, I would suggest Hofmeister lager was not one of them. The flavourless fizzy goo is best remembered for its adverts starring George the Bear, a leering cockney in a shell suit and pork-pie hat. Incredibly, it is making a comeback. It was even voted the "best lager" in blind taste tests. Which is a bit like saying Eddie the Eagle was our best ski jumper.

■ ■ ■

IT SEEMS we have been hit by a bit of a crime wave, with offences in the West Midlands force area up by 14 per cent.

Maybe it is to be expected, given we are now urged to report every bit of bad manners as a "hate crime".

What is revealing, though, is another set of figures showing areas of the West Midlands with the highest crime levels. As you would expect, central Birmingham tops the list with 1,030 crimes in June, but it is the next bit that gets interesting. In second place is Dudley town centre, with 752 crimes – three quarters that of Birmingham – and in fifth place is Stourbridge, with 416 crimes. These two towns have both seen their police stations closed to the public. A coincidence, I'm sure.

Brown revelations, and redhead Anne sparks anger



Sinking feeling – David Attenborough. Too much slow-mo and mood music on his show



Not seeing sense – Gordon Brown. He has revealed he feared losing his eyesight as PM



Seeing red – Anne Robinson, causing untold outrage in the shape of, how many tweets?

TALKING POINT



Just the ticket to drive me off road

The last time I did it, R Kelly was number one in the charts with Ignition, while at the cinema the film "Finding Nemo" had just been released in the United States.

I can't say I found it an enjoyable experience but at the time, it was a case of needs must.

These days, to me, driving is definitely something other people do, which is just as well as after all this time it would be unreasonable to assume that the finer points of the rules of the road have stayed the same.

I was reminded how rapidly such a mundane activity can change by a press release listing 10 rules drivers might have forgotten or did not know.

Many motorists might know they are not legally allowed to flash their lights to give way to others, but how many would be able to say that letting pets out of the car if it has broken down on the hard shoulder is a no-no according to the Highway Code?

Similarly, it's widely known that splashing a pedestrian is an offence, but how about this: paying with a phone at a drive-through takeaway is against the law unless the engine is switched off and handbrake applied.

Talking of pedestrians, pavements these days are turning into an area that could benefit from an on-foot equivalent of the Highway Code. Cyclists, mobility scooters, pushchairs, skateboarders, delivery vans... all are jostling for space on pavements and in pedestrianised areas where space is limited by A-boards, lamp posts, benches, and planters etc.

It's a wonder pedestrians can even get to where they want to, without an unpleasant confrontation or serious injury, but even they can cause problems.

Consider the 'shall we dance?' ritual as people walking towards each other step to the same side to let the other one pass. How about a 'keep left' rule seeing as that's the side we drive on in Britain?

And what about the formation walking teams who stroll along three or even four abreast, forcing those behind them to attract their attention so they can pass without stepping into the road? Let's see a 'leave enough space for overtaking' rule to deal with that one. And when leaving a shop, try looking both ways to avoid collisions with other pavement users.

It's enough to make you want to get behind the wheel again. On second thoughts though, is it worth having to look out for those pesky pedestrians day in day out? Whether on foot or driving, let's be more considerate to each other, shall we? Until then, everyone get out of the way, I've got a bus to catch!

STEVE PARLETT

Fine Dave, but forget the rhapsody in Blue

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



mate the difficulties of employing other people. I have a friend who runs a small company. I once asked him what it's like having 40 employees. "Like having 40 children," he replied.

NEW guidelines from the Good Housekeeping Institute say ice cream kept in the freezer for more than three months can lose its taste. Now, what taste would that be? Ice cream used to be tasty in about 1957 but the modern stuff is taste-free which probably explains why they're starting lacing the caramel varieties with that cheap, all-purpose flavour enhancer, salt.

IN his memoirs out next week, former prime minister Gordon Brown speaks frankly about his failing sight. Pity he wasn't so frank when he was in power. I recall showing him a newspaper with headlines about the state of the economy. He brushed the paper away with one hand. With hindsight, I realise Brown was hiding the fact that he couldn't read it. At the time, it seemed a rude gesture from a very odd bloke.

I AM amazed that any politician can defend fixed-odds gambling machines, the devices that can bankrupt a punter in a matter of hours. These infernal machines are Robin Hood in reverse, robbing the poor to make the rich very rich indeed. One spokesman for the industry this week declared that if the maximum odds were greatly reduced, it would mean the closure of thousands of betting shops. And good riddance, too.

"I CANNOT work with you a moment longer."

With those words, bus operator Sydney Hardy closed his company in Somerset, leaving 27 staff jobless. We can only guess at the stress that led to such a decision, but never underestimate

BARRY Sheerman MP has been accused of snobbery for suggesting "better-educated people" voted to remain in the EU. But he is undeniably right. Brexit was never an intellectual exercise. It was a genuine working-class movement, the same sort of grass-roots uprising that gave us the welfare state and the NHS. And who is to say that the workers got it wrong and academia got it right?

YOU could just as well argue that those exposed to Britain's lefty-liberal education system for longest were thoroughly indoctrinated in an ivory-tower view of the EU, while people living and working in the real world saw it for what it was. A modern-languages professor in London won't hold the same opinion as a self-employed electrician in Walsall. The first rejoices in Europe's rich culture. The second sees his jobs being taken by Polish workers. In last year's referendum we did not vote on the basis of our exam results or IQ. We each took our own life experiences to the ballot box, and a majority wanted to be out rather than in.

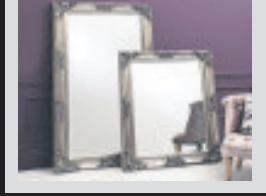
MEANWHILE, here's a lesson in how to create lots of offence from virtually nothing. From the Daily Telegraph website: "Anne Robinson has caused widespread outrage after saying women nowadays are 'fragile' and unable to deal with sexual harassment in the workplace." So what is the evidence for this "widespread outrage"? A million women marching on Robinson's office, perhaps? An internet poll signed by tens of thousands of the outraged? Not exactly. The Telegraph's "widespread outrage" was four tweets from Radio 4 listeners.

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Blame game of belligerent Brexiteers

WHEN I voted to stay in the EU, I was voting for economic stability, security, international friendship, and the long-term preservation of peace.

And what have Mr Farage's divisive machinations brought us? Instability, insecurity, stress, tensions, and a slow-growing animosity between sections of the community within the United Kingdom and across Europe.

I am tired of hearing the hard-line Brexiteers incessantly repeating like demented parrots 'The referendum reflected the clear will of the British people' when in fact only two thirds of the

population of the country voted and even then it was almost a 50-50 split – hardly an overwhelming majority.

I think more accurately that it represented the people's confusion; bamboozled by the Remainers with their over-complicated arguments and duped by the Leavers with their one-issue immigration smokescreen and their hollow, meaningless Trump-like 'give-us-our-country-back' slogans.

Now that more and more facts and undesirable consequences are surfacing, the Brexiteers are becoming more extreme and belligerent, blaming each

other and everybody else for the escalating chaos.

Leaving the EU and following Boris Johnson's stated aim of a 'deregulated society' will open the doors to more zero-hours contracts, unrestricted rent rises, more job insecurity, erosion of workers' rights and more money in fewer pockets.

Only the Liberal Democrats have had the courage to stand up and say 'If we get power we shall stay in the European Union'.

ROBERT PERRY RBSA

Stourbridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bugged by ecological concerns

ACCORDING to a report, there has been at least a 75 per cent drop in insect pollination over the last 30 years.

I am in my late 60s and remember seeing insect splattered windscreens following long car journeys. On late summer nights if windows were left open, lots of moths would fly in seeking the light. This has not been the case for many years.

Insects are crucial as a food source for many species whose numbers have dwindled as a consequence. Extremely important too is their role in pollination of fruit trees and many other food crops.

Surely one of the main causes of this decline must be insecticides. There is still a big debate on the use of the more recent development of neonicotinoids, are they affecting honey bees?

It makes you wonder why nobody really thought about the consequences.

AVRIL FERRIER
Stourbridge

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
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Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Warning after an attack by vicious dog

MAY I thank the kind lady who came to my rescue when my dog was viciously attacked by another dog as I was walking along the Stourbridge Road in Halesowen, near Short Cross petrol station, on October 30.

My dog was badly bitten and would have been more severely wounded without her timely intervention as the young girl who was with the dog was worse than useless. The dog (a brindle Staffie type) was wearing a totally inadequate collar which snapped open under strain. In over 40 years owning and walking dogs I have never seen so vicious an attack. I would also ask this lady, who evidently knew the girl, to contact the owner. I do not know this dog's history but it should not be allowed out in public without a muzzle. I would like to warn other dog walkers to be aware.

JILL BODDY
Halesowen

Rainbows praise train courtesy

CAN I please thank everyone who on Wednesday, October 18, gave up their seats to a group of Rainbows on the 17.45 (in reality 18.15), train from Cradley Heath to Stourbridge.

We had been on a trip but hadn't taken into account that autumn phenomenon, leaves on the track, so had to wait half an hour at Cradley to get on a very packed train with 15 five to six-years-olds.

People were so lovely and proved there are far more good people about than are given credit for. Every girl was given a seat so they could all stay together and be by their leaders by people who'd been at work all day, had waited possibly longer than 30 minutes and wanted to get home. The same help applied on the Shuttle.

Many thanks everyone, you were a great example to the girls.

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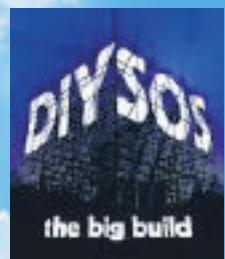
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Teenage soldier honoured 61 years after his death



Keith Hawker with the Elizabeth Cross posthumously awarded in memory of his brother Joseph who died during National Service in Cyprus



Private Joseph Hawker, 19, shortly before his death caused by an explosion

A TEENAGE soldier who died more than six decades ago has finally been recognised for his service and sacrifice.

Joseph Anthony Hawker, of Brierley Hill, was one of almost 400 British servicemen who died fighting insurgents in Cyprus in 1956.

Private Hawker was one of a group of soldiers hurriedly sent to the then-British colony to help the island's police deal with the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters. But during an operation to capture the group's leader Georgios Grivas, Private Hawker died in a forest fire caused by a mortar.

Keith Hawker, the one surviving sibling of Private Hawker's seven brothers and sisters, received The Elizabeth Cross on his behalf on Tuesday. It was being presented by John Crabtree OBE, The Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands, in Dudley.

Emotional

Mr Hawker, aged 76, said: "It is just so sad I'm the only one left in the family to finally see it. It is a big shame this did not come many years ago."

Joseph Hawker was born in Lower Valley Road in Brierley Hill and attended Hawbush School. He left aged 15 and went to work for Stuart Glassworks in Brierley Hill. But he was

called up to national service in 1956, joining hundreds of servicemen to serve in the four-year Cyprus Emergency. He had only been called up four months before his death and was buried at Wayne's Keep, the British Military Cemetery on the island.

His brother said: "I was 14 at the time. We were devastated. Only weeks before he had written a letter saying he was enjoying serving on the island."

Private Hawker had seven siblings - Derek, Keith, Gordon, Christine, Cynthia, Stephanie and Janet.

The Elizabeth Cross is given to the next of kin of members of British Armed Forces killed in action or as a result of a terrorist attack.

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£1m boost for creatives in Black Country

AN ARTS project has been awarded funding of nearly £1 million which will allow it to operate for a further three years.

Creative Black Country seeks to make the most of talent across the region and has run projects including Desi Pubs, 100 Masters and the ongoing Funny Things comedy festival.

It was established in 2014 for an initial three-year run but has now received £999,335 from the Arts Council's Creative People and Places fund which will allow it to continue until 2020.

Parminder Dosanjh, creative director at Creative Black Country, said: "We're over the moon! Over the past few years we have been lucky enough to collaborate with some exceptional people."

"We look forward to building on the work of Desi Pubs, 100 Masters and Funny Things, and continue to share rich narratives from people and places across Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton."

Creative Black Country was one of six successful arts projects across England to receive a share of £5.5m Arts Council funding. The money is designed to ensure more people create and experience arts and culture in the places where they live. It targets 21 places across England with low cultural engagement.

Stray Birds fly in for gig at Birmingham pub

AMERICAN bluegrass trio The Stray Birds bring their rocking roots music to Birmingham on Wednesday, November 15.

They will be in concert at Kings Heath venue the Hare and Hounds.

The Stray Birds have been flying high since the 2012 release of their critically acclaimed self-titled album.

School suggesting extra layer after heating breaks

Veteran cycle champ launches race



Sponsors and cyclists join forces to launch the Round the Wrekin event 2018 with the aim of getting 1,000 signed up

A POPULAR fundraising cycle event has been launched for 2018, with sponsors and cycling stars joining forces.

The Banks's Round The Wrekin cycle sportive is to take place in May 2018 and follows hot on the heels of this year's race, which amassed more than £28,000 for Wolverhampton's Compton Hospice.

Cycling champion Hugh Porter

MBE launched the event surrounded by representatives from Marston's Brewery. One special guest was managing director of the firm, Richard Westwood, who will be cycling the full 100 miles in 2018 after completing 60 miles on a tandem with his daughter this year.

More than 740 cyclists took part in the Round The Wrekin cycle sportive 2017, up by around 140.

Organisers are hoping to welcome more than 1,000 cyclists in 2018.

Mr Porter said: "Sadly, I think many families are touched by cancer in one way or another. I myself have lost my sister and uncle to the disease. So whatever I can do to help the hospice is special to me. If we can 1,000 riders at the event, it means we can raise even more for the charity."

Visit www.roundthewrekin.co.uk

PUPILS at one of Dudley's largest secondary schools have been told to wear extra clothing after the heating broke down. Ellowes Hall Sports College in Lower Gornal has been without full heating since September.

Headteacher Alan Jasper said the main boilers have stopped working, leaving the school, which has around 1,000 pupils, without heating and hot water in some areas.

Emergency repairs will take more than three months to complete, either side of Christmas, but temporary heating and hot water would be in place during this time.

Mr Jasper said the boilers had failed due to 'age and wear and tear' and that a grant to cover the £270,000 repairs had recently been approved.

Condemned

"When school reopened in September the two main school heating boilers were condemned due to age and wear and tear. The school immediately applied for an emergency grant to cover the costs of the repairs.

"We take the education and welfare of our students very seriously and, hence, we will endeavour to keep the school open if at all possible during this time. Currently, the situation is monitored every day and at present there is no need to close the school.

"We will advise parents and carers when the temporary system is up and running, however, in the meantime, students are advised to wear an additional layer of clothing under their school uniform if required."

More than half of the school has heating and hot water in areas including the dining hall, sports hall, PE department and sixth form block.

Two authors in library talk about novels

TWO authors famed for their modern take on the romance novel will be visiting Wordsley Library this month.

Authors Christie Barlow and Bella Osborne will be at the free event on November 23. The pair will be talking all about their work as writers, taking questions and answers from the audience and selling signed copies of their books.

Christie, who lives in Staffordshire, is the author of seven novels and her latest, *The Cosy Canal Boat Dream*, was recently published by Harper Collins. Her books focus on the domestic, from playground tales to countryside living, infused with warmth and humour.

Bella, who lives in the Midlands has been jotting down stories as far back as she can remember but decided that 2013 would be the year that she finished her first novel. To book a place contact (01384) 812765.

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They said they'd restore my smile, but they gave me back

Predictably reassuring

WITH a memorable manly handshake, John Clews exudes a quiet, deep-seated confidence. Articulate, transparent and at times philosophical, he's sharply focussed on why he's agreed to do this interview: "I want to give people like me hope," he declares.

The die-sinker knows a thing or two about clever engineering – he's been helping to construct specialised aircraft parts for more than 46 years – but with multiple failing teeth, instinctively knew that he too required the kind of skill that sets him apart as an experienced factory problem-solver.

For years, gum disease had insidiously invaded his mouth until toothache had become part of his daily routine.

Not unusual

Intellectually, he knew he needed a dentist – and a good one – but gripped by a crippling fear he'd "pop the paracetamol" rather than face his demons.

"Fear is a terrible thing . . . I remember sitting in a dentist's chair and gripping the armrests so hard I pulled one of them off," John says.

"I came here and they promised to restore my smile, but they gave me back my life. It's true," he adds.

Practice principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS Eng GDC 108353 explains: "Periodontal disease is the biggest single cause of tooth loss in the UK and John's case is not unusual."

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"There is plenty of study that examines the psychological impact of troublesome teeth on our lives. But like the insidious nature of gum disease, it can happen slowly as we make small changes to accommodate oral decline. Eventually, however, as things become more acute we are less able to adapt."

Matters came to head three years ago when John's family booked a weekend break at the Brecon Beacons to do a waterfalls walk.

Adds John: "We take so many things for granted. We'd been walking a good few hours – we'd had a lovely time – and we were all ready for something to eat. We came across a cafe serving bacon sandwiches. But they hadn't got any normal bread and the bacon was served with baguettes.

Lifestyle investment

"There was no way my teeth could have coped with the crusty bread so I ended up with a piece of cheesecake. I just so wanted

a bacon sandwich, but my teeth had restricted my choice.

"That was it. At that point I decided to sort out my teeth."

"Too many times I'd go to a restaurant and look at 20 things on the menu and was only able to manage four of the choices. I'd really want steak, but I couldn't chew it: sometimes I just wouldn't go and eat out and I was always on my guard about smiling."

"And the toothache, the impact on daily

The implant teeth are great and I can eat whatever I want and go out for a meal whenever I want.

I'd go to a restaurant and look at 20 things on the menu and was only able to manage four of the choices.

It's a lifestyle investment for me and the difference it has made to my life is remarkable. It's a new kind of freedom.

All the staff were fantastic. I felt so much at ease. The people you meet here say a lot about the place.

living . . . it just drags you down and confidence wanes," he says.

After having six implants in his upper jaw to support a complete arch of teeth and undergoing other remedial work, John is now able to live his life without having to worry about his teeth.

"The implant teeth are great and I can eat what I want, go out for a meal when I want and more than this . . . I've got my life back," says the keen carp fisherman.

Explaining he could have changed his car, John adds such an investment would be lost very quickly.

"This [the implants] has been a lifestyle investment for me and the difference it's made to my life is remarkable. It's a new kind of freedom," he says.

And his dental phobia? "All the staff were fantastic, I felt so much at ease."

The surgery was carried out by North Street's implant dentist Owain Rees BDS DGDP (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL) GDC 61576. Owain was in the vanguard of UK implant dentistry, placing his first in the late '80s.

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Talk on future of beacon beauty spot

TONIGHT (Thursday) the past, present and future of a beauty spot between Wolverhampton and Dudley will be the subject of a talk.

Conservation manager of Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust, Simon Atkinson, will speak about Sedgley Beacon and its historic features, including the Victorian tower, at St Andrew's Church in Bilston Street, Sedgley, at 7.30pm.

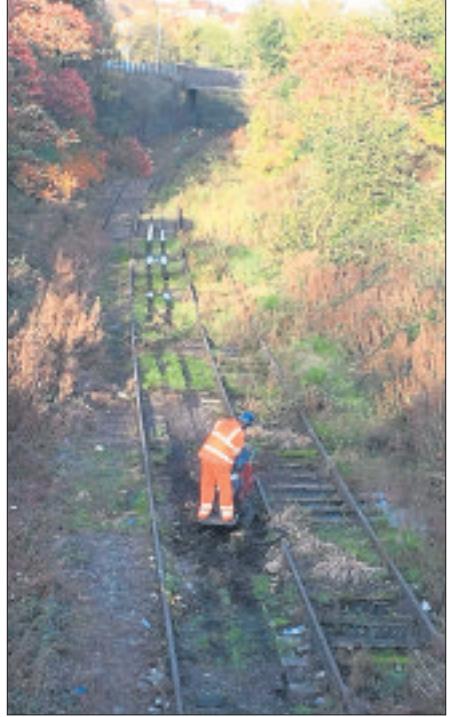
From a vantage point on the beacon it is possible to get a view across the Black Country, Wolverhampton into Staffordshire and, on a clear day, as far away as Wales.

Heritage

Mr Atkinson will be telling Sedgley Local History Society about the wildlife trust's bid to turn Sedgley Beacon into a major green attraction. They are jointly applying with Dudley Council to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support plans for enhancing and protecting the site.

The talk is free for members of the society (£5 annual membership) and costs £1 for visitors.

Work for the new Metro line is on track



Work taking place to clear the route for the Metro trams

WORK to clear a disused railway track ahead of the opening of a new Midland Metro line extension to Dudley is continuing.

This picture shows contractors for the Midland Metro Alliance working on a stretch of the former South Staffordshire railway line near Dudley Port railway station.

They are clearing vegetation from the track, last used by passengers in 1965 and officially closed in 1993. The track will form part of the Midland Metro Line from Wednesday to Brierley Hill.

A Midland Metro Alliance spokesman said: "Preliminary works are currently taking place, which involve Network Rail being on site to remove the existing rails. This is required as the tramway will operate using different track than the previous heavy rail line."

The £200m line will feature 17 stops between Wednesday and Brierley Hill town centre, including The Black Country Living Museum, Dudley Zoo and Castle.

The seven-mile route is expected to open to passengers in 2023, with trams operating up to every six minutes during busy periods.

Veteran fly the flag councillor dies at 80

A VETERAN councillor who represented a South Staffordshire village for more than 40 years has died, aged 80.

Councillor Bryn Whitehouse joined Essington Parish Council in 1973 and served on the district council. Paying tribute, Councillor David Clift said: "He was one of our community's great characters."

Councillor Whitehouse, a great-grandfather, flew the flag of St George from a 25ft pole on his front drive every day for almost half a century. He made one exception for the American flag on the election of President Barack Obama with the flag coming from Essington, Pennsylvania.

There will be no let up in fines, says council boss

A COUNCIL boss in Dudley has insisted there will be no let up in parking fines after nearly 4,000 were issued across the borough in three months.

A total of 3,796 parking charge notices were handed out in Dudley between July and September, putting

£82,225 into the council coffers. More were issued for parking violations in Dudley town centre's Castle Street than anywhere else in the borough.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, environment boss at Dudley Council, said: "Parking restrictions are in place across the borough and serve an important purpose in ensuring our roads are as safe and free flowing as they can be."

"If drivers ignore these restrictions or park illegally they must expect to receive a fine."

"Illegal parking is a persistent problem across the borough and something that residents bring to their local councillors on a daily basis."

"Money generated from parking fines is ring-fenced to go back into the upkeep of the roads and improving road safety."

Church buildings officer appointed

A NEW church buildings officer has been appointed to support religious leaders who are planning changes at their places of worship.

Mark Carter has been brought in by the Diocese of Worcester and will work with officials across Dudley and Worcester when they want to make changes to church buildings and churchyards. He previously worked as the operations manager at Hereford Cathedral.

Mr Carter said: "I am used to the processes involved in seeking approval for works on ecclesiastical buildings. I am looking forward to moving from a single site to working throughout the diocese and gaining a better understanding of the range of ways in which parish churches are used."

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So many lovely pictures, soon time to decide



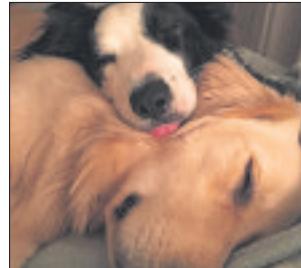
Puppy Milo likes to climb in his toy box



Bob pops in to see the goldfish



Cinnamon and Nutmeg are best friends



Penny and Bella having a cuddle



Charlie out in the back garden



Archie enjoys a run on the beach

Countdown now on for the final judging

WELL this is the last week we will be carrying pictures of all your adorable pets - for now.

But do not despair. If your pet has not featured on our weekly competition page that does not mean that it will not be included in the shortlist for the final judging.

Keep an eye out for the shortlist of 10 which will be appearing in our editions of Thursday, November 30 and Thursday, December 7.



Then it will be up to you readers to let us know what you think. We are looking for the most interesting picture.

When we print the shortlist we will

include details of how to vote so keep your eye out.

As well as the £100 prize the winner will feature on the front page of our Christmas week editions.

Over the weeks we have had hundreds of entries of all sorts of different pets. Some out walking, some playing, lots eating and enjoying a snooze, but one thing has become very clear - just how much these pets are loved. Thanks for all your entries.

Civil war breaks out at meeting

Amblecote History

CHAIRMAN Geoff Longmore welcomed visitors and members to a talk on the civil war and its local connections by retired local history teacher Max Keen.

Max entered the theatre in a civil war soldier's costume. The audience was asked to guess which side he was on, explaining that both sides wore virtually the same except the officers who wore a red or orange sash to distinguish whether they were Royalist led by King Charles I or Parliamentarian led by Oliver Cromwell.

Max illustrated and described local places connected with the war, such as the visit to Stourbridge by Prince Rupert who stayed at The Talbot. Other local places involved were Wollscote Hall, Enville and Stourton Castle. Max showed his disgruntlement of no commemorative Heritage Blue Plaques in these prominent places.

After the battle of Worcester in 1651 King Charles II fled via Stourbridge and Wordsley on his way to Boscobel. They were approached by a group of Parliamentarians, so Charles and his group dismounted and walked through Stourbridge, speaking French.

At the time the town was full of French speaking Huguenot glassmakers and the Royal group blended in to aid their escape.

His talk was accompanied by slides and references to actions taken by the King and Roundheads around the district.

Banding together to support Alzheimer's



Margaret Morgan and Maureen Hall with guild chairman Gaynor Ormerod

The Sedgley Morning TG

by giving them something to do with their hands. The bands will be part of a presentation to the Society at a Guild meeting in February.

Illustrated talk on secret garden

Cleint Gardening Club

Rugeley. Derek explained the name came from the description by a visitor who could not find it on one of Derek's open garden days.

Members were enthralled by his entertaining approach laced with a wide variety of splendid photo-

graphs which he had taken showing his garden in all its glories. The garden occupies a three-quarters of an acre plot but is crammed full of a huge and varied number of plants catering for all seasons.

Treasurer Peter Orme proposed a vote of thanks for an excellent talk and most entertaining evening.

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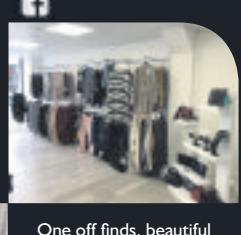
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Advertising Standards Authority

Glasses lost on buses help people in Africa

THEY make up just a fraction of the thousands of items left every year on buses across the West Midlands. However, the glasses and sunglasses currently in the lost property department of National Express West Midlands are being put to good use.

Glasses left behind by passenger are always handed into lost property teams in the hope that they can be reunited with their owners. But if they remain unclaimed are donated to an international charity.

Linda Brian is based at the bus operator's Birmingham Central garage and it is part of her job to regularly collect the unclaimed glasses from across the company's garages in the Black Country and Birmingham.

She hands them over to Lions Club International, which sort and clean the spectacles, which are assessed and shipped out to Lions Club colleagues across Africa. They then match the prescription glasses to local people suffering from a variety of sight issues. The glasses are given

to those in need completely free of charge.

Brigitte Green, Birmingham office branch manager for Lions Club International, said the glasses were invaluable for the charity's work in Africa. She said anyone who has lost glasses on buses throughout the West Midlands could at least be consoled with the thought that they were being put to good use in a different part of the world.

She said: "We simply cannot get hold of enough of these glasses and National Express West Midlands is our biggest supporter by far, really making a huge difference to so many people. In this, our centennial year, Lions Club International aims to donate one million pairs of glasses to Africa."

Linda Brian, at National Express West Midlands, said glasses are stored for a decent period to enable the owner to claim them. "We all know just how expensive these prescription glasses are," she added.



Linda Brian and Jack Turrell from National Express with Brigitte Green, of Lions Club International

Police say they need £1.3bn to fight crime

POLICE forces need an extra £1.3 billion to tackle terrorism and a surge in offences, according to crime chiefs.

The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APPC) said an extra £440 million would be required in 2018/19 and £845m more in the following financial year.

The extra money would pay for 5,000 more officers to deal with new types of crime, as well as an additional 1,100 armed police.

The calls have been backed by Labour West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson and his Conservative Staffordshire counterpart, Matthew Ellis. The plea comes following funding cuts since 2010.

The Government agreed to protect overall spending in the 2015 spending review but the way that money is allocated means some forces are likely to lose out.

Stretched

Paddy Tipping, the APPC's finance deputy lead, said: "The police workforce has been reduced by nearly 19 per cent over the last seven years and at a time when the population is growing and the sheer complexity of policing is increasing. It is clear more funding is required."

Mr Tipping, who is Nottinghamshire crime commissioner, added: "The police have had to respond to horrific terrorist acts and unprecedented levels of demand at our control rooms and, increasingly, we know that officers and staff, whose work we all value so greatly, have become stretched like never before. A lack of investment will lead to increases in crime."

Mr Jamieson said crime was rising.

"West Midlands Police has faced £145 million cuts since 2010," he said. "If the Government values the safety of the public they



Amber Rudd – critical need to give forces the resources they need."

Mr Ellis wants Government to allow commissioners to increase council tax above the two per cent cap.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd has faced a backlash after telling police bosses to focus on cutting crime instead of lobbying the Government for more money.

She called on police and crime commissioners to tell residents how they will make them safer, rather than calling for extra cash.

"When crime stats go up, I don't just want to see you reaching for a pen to write a press release asking for more money from the Government," she said.

Her comments were criticised by Commissioner Jamieson. He said: "Amber Rudd's outburst is truly incredible. The Home Secretary is ignoring the evidence from Chief Constables working on the frontline to protect people. We are doing all we can to keep our streets safe, but it is much harder with dwindling budgets and fewer officers."

Carillion sells £13m development assets to Richardson family

THE Black Country-based Richardson family has snapped up some of the assets of struggling construction group Carillion.

Wolverhampton-headquartered Carillion is selling off parts of its operation as it seeks to re-build its finances in the wake of a massive fall in share value after revealing a £1.15 billion half-year loss.

The group has now sold its 67 per cent shareholding in property development company Ask Real Estate and a 50 per cent stake in separate entity Ask Carillion Developments, for £18.3 million to Dukehill.

Shopping

Based in Oldbury, Dukehill has a £60.8m-turnover and specialises in commercial and residential property development. It is owned by the Richardson family, headed by surviving twin Roy, who were the original developers and owners of the Merry Hill Shopping Centre.

Of the £13.8m, £1m is dependent on the sale of 100 Embankment in Salford, to be paid by Dukehill within five business days of signing the sale documentation.

Carillion has appointed a new chief executive Andrew Davies, currently chief executive of Wates Group, to lead its turn around.

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14 Rehab rather than jail for drug abuser

A 25-year-old whose life has been blighted by drug taking has been spared jail to help him beat the habit.

Kirt Nash has developed mental health issues as a result of drug abuse and had left him homeless, a judge heard.

Wolverhampton Crown Court was told that Nash was sitting on the kerb in Gibbons Lane, Kingswinford, when a young woman walked by on April 6. He suddenly ran towards her clutching a sharpened sliver of plastic and told the horrified victim he was going to stab her. Fortunately she managed to flee from him without injury, said Mr Ekwali Tiwana, prosecuting. Nash was arrested the following day after being caught stealing a sandwich from a branch of Greggs. He still had the sharp piece of plastic on his person.

Mr Simon Williams, defending, explained: "He has got mental health issues as a result of his use of illicit substances but does not seem mature enough to approach the appropriate authorities for assistance."

Nash had denied threatening a person with a blade but was convicted after a trial. Recorder Kevin Hegarty QC told him: "You need support to help you." Nash was given a 12 month community order with rehabilitation. Time in jail on remand meant he had already served the equivalent of 12 months behind bars.

Diwali dance show is a celebration of light

JAIVANT Patel Dance bring a celebration of the festival of Diwali in dance to Wolverhampton University's city centre Arena Theatre on Saturday night. Diwali Utsav: Sitaron Ke Sang celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil. Tickets cost £12 (£10 concessions) for the 7.30pm show. See wlv.ac.uk/arena-theatre

Also taking cakes to the event was Rose Macefield, who runs cake deco-

rating shop Rose Marie's Cakes and Sugarcraft in Coseley.

She was also holding an author's stand for her book *Sensational Sculpted Cakes*.

Dobby

But that has not stopped her bringing her latest creations Dobby the House Elf and Fawkes the Phoenix from Harry Potter, a Niffler from Fan-

tastic Beasts and Groot from Guardians of the Galaxy.

Since decorating her first cake in 2007, Rose has gone onto win Overall Best in Show at Cake International in 2013 and at Cake Masters in 2014.

Mrs Macefield, aged 43, said: "I'm bringing along cakes to show students what they can achieve."

"I meet a lot of beginners who think they cannot do that, but they can."

Fantasy cakes are out of this world



Rose Macefield, of Rose Marie's Cakes and Sugarcraft in Coseley with her cakes, including Dobby from Harry Potter and ET

FROM ET to Guardians Of The Galaxy – incredible cakes made in the Black Country were on show when Cake International was held at the NEC, Birmingham, at the weekend.

Amelia Mason, owner of Shuga Budz in Tettenhall, displayed a four-tier Batman theme cake in the celebration cake category.

Also taking cakes to the event was

Rose Macefield, who runs cake deco-

rating shop Rose Marie's Cakes and Sugarcraft in Coseley.

She said it was a sad indictment of some pupils' behaviour but if the school felt the measures were needed then the decision should be backed.

Ms Nicolas said: "I think it's a sad day in a way but the school has clearly got a good reason for doing it." **Difficult**

"We can get hysterical about this and think children are going to be filmed but that isn't going to happen. What we know is that children are bullied and abused in private places."

"We don't want cameras pointing at toilets but if we have to go to these extreme measures to protect children then that is what we have to do. It's a sad day when a school has to do this but unfortunately they are dealing with more and more difficult behaviour."

Sixty-six per cent of 1,000 voters who took part in a poll by The Chronicle's sister newspaper the Express & Star poll said installing the cameras in toilets was the wrong move.

Mr Bowkett added: "I must stress this is to allow us to monitor who is entering and leaving the communal areas and I can reassure parents no cameras are directed towards sensitive areas including cubicles or urinals."

It's a Cannon ball to help cancer charity

SHOWBIZ and sports stars will help celebrate a Black Country charity's six-year mission to support families battling cancer.

Celebrities will visit to Wolverhampton for Balls To Cancer's glittering Christmas gala event, paying tribute to the Coseley-based charity's fight to raise awareness of male cancer. Sue Bates, who co-founded the charity with husband Mark, said: "It's all about having a good time and celebrating our year."

The event at Ramada Park Hall Hotel will include a Christmas dinner on November 17, with guests including comedians Tommy Cannon and Paul Chuckle, former Wolves striker Mel Eves, Sandra Martins of TV's *Gogglebox*, Jamie Reed and Jade Lewis, from *The Only Way* is Essex, and former Wolves star Jamie O'Hara. For information or to buy tickets, £40, visit ballstocancer.co.uk

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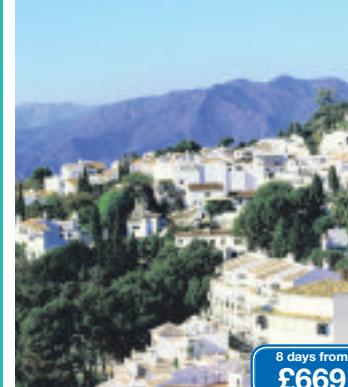
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Val is inspiring others to Kinect with success

SHE lives in Los Angeles and is a leading light in technology – but Val Wright always has time for her old stomping ground.

The University of Wolverhampton alumni was back where her journey began to inspire innovation in businesses, like she had when she was part of the team that created the innovative Xbox Kinect device for gamers.

The 43-year-old, originally from Stourbridge, spoke to a lecture theatre of students and local businesses about setting up her own business so they could see how to seek out similar achievements.

She said: "For me I do a lot of conferences and events, especially in October, and give talks in LA and Silicon Valley to big time executives – but this is by far my favourite of the month to come back to my university. I was asked to come back to talk about successful companies and how you distinguish yourself from other brands.

Different

"Look at Blackberry for example, they were very successful but closed down almost overnight. You need to know how to be different in this day and age."

Val was part of the team behind Xbox Kinect which has voice command technology, motion tracking and facial recognition to login and play video games in a different way.

To highlight the importance of innovation at the event, she ditched the powerpoint presentation and used a microphone shaped as a ball which could be thrown around the room for everyone to ask questions and have



Val Wright spoke to University of Wolverhampton students and local firms their say. She said: "I said by the time I am 40 I want my own business and to write a book. It is nice to know there are people that were me 24 years ago so they can see what is possible."

The talk comes ahead of her second book, called Trifecta, which discusses the working relationship between creative business and technical teams. Her first book, Thoughtfully Ruthless: The Key to Exponential Growth, was released last year and looks at the best way to use energy as a business and make the most of resources. It was named Business Book of the Year 2017 by the Independent Press Awards.

Val started off at Dorothy Perkins and then moved to House of Fraser while studying at the University of Wolverhampton. She now lives in LA with her three daughters and her husband.

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Your vintage items could net some festive cash

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES



with John Ridgway of Perry & Phillips



WITH Christmas looming clear on the horizon many of us will be embarking on some festive shopping.

So why not boost that present budget with a little extra cash by selling some vintage items?

Now is the time to sort out pieces that you think would sell well at auction and that also might make nice gifts.

Nice pieces of china are always popular in the sale room, quality and condition being the watchwords.

Jewellery is again a good seller, especially at this time of year.

So decide whether or not you can part with quality pieces and remember that good costume items are also popular.

Militaria is right up there on the Christmas shoppers' wish-list so do seek out medals, sweetheart pins, badges, postcards and "Trench Art".

Collectable vintage books are sought after as gifts as are framed cigarette cards, walking sticks and even top hats.

Appeal

Silver items never lose their appeal and everything from dressing table sets and powder compacts to punch-bowls and candelabras are good sellers.

Don't forget that small items of furniture are also snapped up as presents, people are especially on the look-out for pretty, decorative pieces.

Music memorabilia will attract the bidders as will really unusual items such as scrimshaw walking canes (which can sell for huge amounts of money).

As with everything taken to the saleroom for valuation the pieces destined to hopefully boost your Christmas shopping spree will have to be in good condition.

Signs of wear and tear and other damage will affect the price.

Of course if you are selling at auction you may be keen to attend the sale - and pick up some festive bargains yourself!

• Perry and Phillips hold valuation days, for sale items only, every Wednesday from 10am until 4pm.

• The next Perry and Phillips sale of antiques and collectables takes place at the Mill Street saleroom on December 5 - our Christmas auction.

Viewing will be during the weekend and on Monday and also from 10am on auction day.

• New sale bidders are advised to attend the saleroom early on auction day to register and be allocated a bidding number.

• Perry and Phillips hold sales on the first Tuesday of every other month.



New trends in fabric as winter draws ever closer

STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



Turquoise and mustard combine well

FABRIC appears in so many areas of our life - clothing, furniture and home textiles but also in accessories, toys, ornaments and gifts.

Fabric has been used for clothing and textiles for thousands of years, cotton, linen and silk appearing in India, Egypt and China in about 5,000BC and the first man made textile, Rayon, in France in the late 1800s.

The newest weaving and dying methods produce technological advances in depth of colour, interesting textures and distinctive prints. Fabrics keep us warm and dry and have defined tribes, clans, military position and status for many years, they are incredibly important. Our history of producing fabric in the UK has all but disappeared and most are now imported from India and China.

This autumn/winter we see beautiful new fabric and textural trends. The first of these following the consumers ongoing interest in sustainability, social responsibility, recycling and energy efficiency and the textile mills need to show they are contributing to this practice and demonstrate a return to traditional solutions.

The second is the well-being and health

trend, the "feel good" factor, athletic and sporty, visually exciting with great use of colour, fit and comfort as standard.

The final trend focuses on new technology, experimental and revolutionary fibres and finishes, new developments providing more smart textiles and now starting to be seen in high street clothing.

Clothing colours include black and white used in checks, graphics, tweeds, dogs tooth and chunky knits and strong contrasts in patterns and prints. Turquoise and teal variations highlight strongly alongside ambers, mustards and deep yellows brightening those darker winter days, particularly when used in fun accessories but essentially in blocks of stand-out colour for coats, suits and casuals. Pre-Raphaelite florals feature in classical shapes and intense colours softening the sharp backgrounds.

Fabrics are layered, simulating bark, earth and stone textures, complicated chunky knits, natural elaborate patterning and soft fluffy dual coloured synthetic furs and deep pile chenilles. The complete look totally influenced by the natural world and the essential need for comfort.

Colour blocking, monochrome, floral, natural organic inspirations, teal and forest, neutrals, blacks, greys and pinks feature in the latest home trend colours too. The prints are flowers, leaves and trees, geometric patterns, images from nature. As with clothing, the fabric textures are important, linens, velvets and knits will feature in abundance complimented with quilting and chunky wovens.

The only down side is the absolute need to change our wardrobe and home decoration to fit in with these new and exciting trends, every six months, before the designers suggest the next best spring/summer options for 2018 and beyond.

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Ten reasons to cycle, scoot or walk the school run

Report by Peter Kitchen

TAKING your children on the school run perfect opportunity to look at changing your family's travel habits.

Matt Easter, England director, Midlands & East at Sustrans, the UK walking and cycling charity, shares his top 10 reasons to shake up your school run.

BUILD PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO THE DAILY ROUTINE

According to government guidelines, children and young people aged 5 to 18 need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, while adults should get a minimum of 150 minutes a week. At 1.6 miles, the average primary school journey is a distance that can be cycled, scooted or walked as an easy way of building more activity into our busy lives.

IT CAN ALSO BOOST MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Physical activity can increase mental alertness, energy, positive mood and self-esteem, as well as reducing stress and anxiety, according to the Mental Health Foundation.

IT'S A GREAT WAY TO START THE DAY

Teachers find that pupils who walk, cycle or scoot arrive at school more relaxed, alert and ready to start the day than those who travel by car. Parents can benefit in the same way and burn some precious calories along the way - a 20-minute bike ride can use the same amount of calories as a cappuccino, a bar of chocolate or a 175ml glass of wine.

HELP EASE CONGESTION OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL GATES

The proportion of children walking and cycling to school has been declining in England since 1995, with the number being driven to primary school increasing each year - as many as one in four cars on the road during the morning peak are on the school run. Leaving the car at home means you'll take the hassle out of parking too.

LESS CARS MEANS LESS POLLUTION

Up to 40,000 early deaths are attributable to air pollution each year in the UK - only smoking contributes to more early deaths. Road transport is responsible for 80 per cent of the pollution where legal limits are being broken and children are particularly affected. What's more, those who travel by car can experience five times higher pollution levels than those who cycle and three and a half times more than those walking the same route. Not only is air pollution harmful to humans, it also affects animal and plant life.

INCREASING CHILDREN'S AWARENESS OF ROAD SAFETY

Instilling a love of cycling, scooting or walking in children from a young age has long-lasting benefits - as well as developing road awareness to encourage independent travel as a teenager, it can also create good habits for an active adult life.



More children are walking, cycling and scooting to school - and Sustrans has advice to help them do so safely. Picture: Sustrans

CONNECT WITH THE WORLD AROUND YOU

Cycling, scooting and walking brings you closer to nature and the changes in the seasons. Whether it's spotting wildlife or noticing the leaves changing colour on the trees, two wheels are better than four when it comes to connecting with nature and getting to know your local area.

YOU'LL SAVE MONEY

Cycling, scooting or walking the school run will save you and your family a small fortune. Not only will you be forking out less on petrol, you might also save money on gym fees, leaving you with more cash in your pocket.

IT BENEFITS US ALL

From health to road safety, retail and tourism, there is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the economic benefits of cycling and walking. In England alone 10 billion annual journeys are undertaken every year by bike and on foot, with an estimated combined economic value of £14 billion [9].

THE FRESH AIR, FREEDOM AND FUN

Taking time out of your day to cycle, scoot or walk together is a great chance to catch up on your child's day and spend quality time with each other while enjoying the fresh air and freedom of travelling under your own steam.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD CYCLE OR SCOOT TO SCHOOL

Sustrans has some top tips for parents to help your child become a bicycle or scooter commuter.

Mornings are a busy time for parents and it can be overwhelming to get your child ready for cycling or scooting on top of other things you need to do before leaving home. With a little preparation cycling or scooting can be the best way to get to school.

Plan your journey in advance. Choose a smooth, flat route and avoid steep hills and busy roads where possible.

When starting out it's a good idea to take your child to the park or another traffic-free area to practise their cycling or scooting. Sustrans is the pioneer and guardian of the National Cycle Network - with thousands of miles of traffic-free routes across the UK, the Network is the ideal place to build confidence.

For more information and inspiration visit www.sustrans.org.uk.

Make sure your child's bike fits and all your bikes are roadworthy

If you're using a scooter, ensure any bolts are tightened before setting off and check the wheels and handlebars are attached securely. Make sure any folding parts are fully locked in the riding position.

Children should wear sensible shoes such as trainers. Flip-flops and sandals aren't suitable. Avoid wearing baggy clothing which may get caught up in the bike or scooter.

Don't hang anything on the handlebars as it could upset the balance of the bike or scooter.

If you're on the road with children take up a position behind them. If there are two adults in your group it's a good idea to have one at the back and one in front of the children.

Set a good example: follow the Highway Code and teach children road safety and awareness.

When your child is scooting on the pavement make sure you walk nearest the road. Encourage children to go slowly or to walk where necessary when passing other people on the pavement.

Your child should get off their bike or scooter when crossing roads.

helmets are recommended for young children, though ultimately this is a question of individual choice and parents need to make that choice for their children.

For more information, advice and support visit www.sustrans.org.uk/what-you-can-do

Choir celebrate 25th anniversary in style

ONE of the largest chamber choirs in the country is warming up to celebrate its leader's 25th anniversary at the helm in style.

Renowned conductor Paul Spicer celebrates a quarter of a century leading Birmingham Bach Choir with a special anniversary concert on November 30 at Birmingham Town Hall.

Fittingly, for a choir named in honour of Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach, Paul has chosen Bach's masterful Mass In B Minor for the performance.

"Bach's B minor Mass is quite simply one of the greatest creations of the human mind," he said ahead of the concert.

"It has been central to my musical career ever since Birmingham Bach Choir's previous musical director, Richard Butt, brought back a full score of the work from Leipzig as a gift for me back in 1988.

"Since then I have conducted the work many times. As I have said

before, I feel that Bach is the only universal composer." Completed in 1749, a year before JS Bach's death, Mass In B minor (BWV 232) revisits previously composed passages and was only performed publicly, in full, a century later.

Since becoming Birmingham Bach Choir's musical director in 1992, Paul has extended their repertoire to cover both contemporary and centuries old, lesser-known works alongside more popular, well-known choral pieces.

For the 25th anniversary concert, Birmingham Bach Choir are joined by the London Baroque Sinfonia, with Sarah Fox (soprano), James Laing (countertenor), Robert Murray (tenor) and Ashley Riches (bass) lending their voices to the ensemble.

Tickets for the choral spectacular start from £12.50 and range up to £25. The concert will begin at 7.30pm.

Tickets can be purchased via www.birmingham.bachchoir.com



The Birmingham Bach Choir will be performing at the city's Town Hall venue

Peaky star Murphy up for film of TV drama

PEAKY Blinders star Cillian Murphy has said he would be up for a big screen adaptation of the hit show – but not a musical.

There have been reports that the BBC drama, which has filmed at the Black Country Living Museum, could be adapted for the West End stage.

Asked about taking part, Murphy, who plays Thomas Shelby in the gangster drama, said: "I heard about that... that's not for me."

He is more likely to sign up for a big-screen version of the Birmingham-set drama. Murphy added: "In theory, yeah. Absolutely, if the writing is as good as it is for the show, then for sure."

Peaky Blinders, also starring Helen McCrory as Aunt Polly, returns to BBC Two with Adrien Brody joining the cast. The US actor said growing up in Queens, New York was 'wonderful ammunition' for his screen characters.

"I have many experiences and truths to draw from, that you might think are far-fetched to be in a film, and I find it remarkable what there is to draw from, and I'm grateful for that," the star of King Kong and The Pianist said.

Meanwhile, McCrory said that she would never tell a director that her character would not do something in the script. "I have worked with actors that come on set and they go 'my character wouldn't say that' and you go 'guess what, your character just did,'" she said.

The latest series, set two years after the third season in 1924, follows the gang's



Cillian Murphy in civvies

attempts to expand internationally. It stars Murphy as leader Tommy Shelby, Anderson as Arthur Shelby and McCrory as Aunt Polly.

Newcomer Aidan Gillen, famous for being Peter Baelish in Game of Thrones, is Aberama Gold. Creator and director Steven Knight was born in Birmingham.

The stars of Peaky Blinders, including the likes of Murphy, descended on Birmingham for the premiere of the fourth season of the show recently.

The fourth series sees Tommy Shelby pursued by a new enemy who threatens to annihilate his entire family.

Warehouse gym plan

A FORMER warehouse in Wednesbury will be transformed into a gym and cafe. The empty site on Old Park Industrial Estate will work alongside businesses in the region to create jobs and better lifestyles for families.

It is a new venture for Wednesbury businessmen Pally and Satnam Sago. They said: "We want to work alongside Sandwell Council in this venture and hopefully create a base that will be social as well as health and wellbeing."

Awards handed out for help to fight loneliness in city

VOLUNTEERS have been rewarded for the work they are doing to battle loneliness.

Citizens at the heart of Ageing Better in Birmingham, a programme set up to tackle isolation in the over 50s, have received awards recognising their work setting up activities and supporting older people. So far, more than 100 volunteers started projects within their communities to help people lead more fulfilling lives.

Stephen Raybould, Ageing Better in Birmingham programme director, said: "The lingering sadness of loneliness can be a cruel and crippling feeling, which affects more people than we realise. Never underestimate the power of human contact and how many people may not have that day to day."

"To have all these volunteers recognise the importance of helping others who feel alone and working hard to tackle loneliness in Birmingham is overwhelming. All of our volunteers have gone above and beyond in their communities. Their hard work and dedication is truly commendable and I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone involved."

"This is a great opportunity to recognise individuals for everything they have done for the lonely people of the city."

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Start to plan now for solar eclipse – in nine years

FEW residents are worried about their energy supply in nine years' time – but the National Grid is already planning for possible problems in 2026.

On August 12 that year there will be a significant eclipse in Britain with the moon passing in front of the sun over Europe which will cause a temporary stalling of power generated by the UK's solar panels.

The National Grid, which balances the country's supply and demand to keep the lights on, is already working on a model to determine the impact of the panels and also the effect on a surge in power as millions of people return inside their homes to put their kettles after watching the eclipse.

"The shock to the electricity system of a sudden loss of solar power, followed by a big increase could cause problems to grid operators," said energy expert Ron Fox of Noreus Ltd.

"Fortunately the UK, Ireland and France will be spared the worst potential effects of the partial eclipse because of its late timing, whereas Spain will have a total eclipse. It will cast the greatest shadow over the UK at about 7.10pm by which time the sun will be lower in the sky and the solar panels will be generating well below their peak output."

"But the event is still forecast to eliminate up to 3.5 gigawatts of solar power generation for at least half an hour, a figure which is equivalent to more than the proposed capacity of Hinkley Point C nuclear plant in Somerset, which may still be being built then."

In a report the National Grid said another problem was Britain could have more than double the capacity of solar panels in 2026 compared to today. Now the country has 12 gigawatts of solar panel capacity, but in nine years' time that could rise to 26 gigawatts as the costs of technology plummet.

The National Grid believes the fluctuation will be manageable with "careful planning" and through lessons learnt from the eclipse in the USA on August 21.

Mr Fox said natural events like this showed householders should plan ahead by switching to green energy and using a thermodynamic solar heating system.

So much of lives spent in the outdoors

GREEN-FINGERED Brits with a fondness for the outdoors spend the equivalent of over three years of their working lives out in the backyard preening and maintaining their gardens during their lifetime, according to new research.

The research has been carried out by garden furniture specialists [BillyOh.com](#), which discovered that UK gardeners spend an average of 5,675 hours getting their lawns and flowers looking pristine over 50 years.

Taking into account that Brits usually spend about 37 hours per week at work for 48 weeks of the year, this means that the UK's garden enthusiasts will spend the equivalent of just over three years of their working lives in the garden.

The figures were compiled to see once and for all how much time the UK spends getting their gardens to look their best.

Even though Brits are less likely to venture into their gardens during the winter, their love for getting their sears, paint pots and lawnmowers out of the shed still sees them spending an average of just over two hours gardening each week.

In total, this means that the average UK gardener will spend about 114 hours on tasks like trimming hedges, re-painting fences and weeding each year.

The garden furniture specialists took in to account regular tasks as well as the one-off jobs homeowners tend to complete just once or twice a year, including a wide range of outdoor chores such as painting sheds and fences, mowing the lawn, raking leaves and cleaning the patio.

A spokesman for [BillyOh.com](#) said: "Spending an average of nearly two hours in the garden each week may seem like a high figure, but it just goes to prove that we really are a nation of garden lovers."



Japanese knotweed canes are turning brittle now – but they will be back

Knotweed lying in wait – so you should tackle it now

IT'S that time of year again when Japanese knotweed's growing season draws to a close and the plant dies away. But homeowners are being urged not to delay tackling the weed as it remains very much alive, waiting to emerge bigger and stronger with new shoots next March.

Although still standing, the bamboo-like canes will now be turning brown and brittle, which can fool homeowners into believing the plant has died or that their own efforts at treating it through cutting the plant back, or burning it, have been successful. But, like many plants, the rhizome system beneath the ground is healthy and lying dormant throughout the colder winter months.

Herbicide treatments cannot be used during winter as they require the plant to be in leaf, but that doesn't mean treatment needs to be postponed until spring. Japanese knotweed can be dug out at any time of year using the environmentally friendly Resi-Dig-Out method, which involves digging out the rhizome roots and sifting out every viable piece before returning the

clean soil to the ground. An insurance-backed guarantee can then be secured for the treatment which will ensure the property can be bought or sold without difficulty.

Nic Seal, MD and founder of specialists EnviroNet, said: "Each winter we see inquiry levels fall, but we know Japanese knotweed hasn't magically disappeared, it's simply a case of out of sight, out of mind. Savvy homeowners will take action through the autumn and winter to tackle knotweed on their land, ensuring they don't face an even bigger problem next spring. Digging knotweed out of the soil is an instant solution, giving homeowners complete peace of mind and the freedom to sell their property if they so wish."

Homebuyers should be particularly vigilant when viewing properties during the winter months, when property owners may have taken advantage of the plant's apparent demise in order to deliberately conceal it. Often the canes have been removed but the crown is still visible in the ground.

Nasty surprises lurk in the ground at this time of year

ROSS UNDERWOOD

Head Gardener at Hodnet Hall



The skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisped and sere;
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir –
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.
(Ulalume by Edgar Allan Poe)

AS the night closes in it is easy to believe that ghosts and ghouls lurk in what in daylight can seem so familiar and comforting.

When the morning or evening sun-light burnishes the trunks and leaves of the oaks and beeches it is hard to credit that all is not right with the world. Yet beneath the canopy, closer to the ground nasties can lurk.

The warm and damp autumnal weather is perfect for the growth of fungi. Anybody who has ever gathered field mushrooms or chicken of the woods knows the pleasure of what has been called "the quiet hunt". A little butter and garlic and you have a veritable feast. Many fungi are not edible and many are downright harmful if ingested though they can be beautiful to look at.

There are some that are harmful to plants as well as people. The most notable of these and the one that accounts for more inquiries to the RHS than any other plant problem is Honey Fungus or Armillaria. Armillaria is a genus of parasitic fungi that live on trees and woody plants as well as some herbaceous plants. They are some of the longest lived and largest organisms in the world, the largest of which covers more than three square miles in Malheur National Park and is more than 2,500 years old.

The fungus is also known as the bootlace fungus because of the black rhizomorphs by which it spreads and which look like bootlaces. Otherwise a white coating of mycelium that smells strongly of mushrooms can be seen beneath the bark. Symptoms include cracking or peeling away of the bark just above the ground, chlorosis or discolouration of the leaves and the death of twigs, branches and whole plants. Often this reveals itself in the later stages of the problem when plants either fail to come into leaf or otherwise wither entirely.

Sometimes death is blissfully rapid or at other times it is a long drawn out process. Often people ask me why their woody play has died after it put on such a good display of flower or fruit the previous year or season. The culprit is usually found in autumn as honey coloured toadstools emerge at the



Honey fungus can be devastating for trees and plants, says Ross



Not everything is what it seems – these fungi are sinister looking but benign



Box Blight turns leaves black

base of the plant or where it's stump was if it has been removed. The fungus will continue to feed on the remaining tissues of the plant after it has died and can often be found along the path of the remaining roots.

From one site of infection the fungus will spread out looking for other hosts to infect which is why it is often possible to plant a new specimen in place of an old one though I would only do this after the ground has been "rested" for at least a year.

The second nasty that I am always aware

of is Box Blight caused by the fungi *Volutella* or *Cylindrocladium*. Symptoms can present at any time of year but are more likely in warm damp weather which is why now is a good time to be on the lookout. Brown or black spots develop on the leaves of *Buxus* plants which may gradually cover the whole leaf surface. The fungus will cause the leaves to fall and stems to die back spoiling the appearance of the plant. Though the fungus might not be directly responsible for the death of a plant which will often reshoot from living tissue. It will weaken a

plant sufficiently that it simple gives up the ghost. This tends to happen over multiple cycles of infection and reinfection.

Hygiene is vital if this cycle is to be interrupted. The trimming or cutting away of the infected growth should be done and all debris including fallen leaves should be cleared away and burned. If this is not done the fungus can be spread by rain splash from fallen leaves.

Soul destroying though it may be to see a precious plant succumb to disease, death is part of life. Don't have nightmares now!

£4m spent on cover for teaching staff at schools

NEARLY £4 million was spent by schools across Dudley employing agency staff in just 12 months – with one agency being paid more than £1 million.

The figures follow a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, which revealed expenditure on teaching cover across primary, secondary and special schools in the borough for 2015/16.

Casual staff were brought in to cover sickness absences and maternity leave to ensure children did not miss lessons. A total of £3.8 million was spent across the borough.

Around £1.2 million was spent on agency staff from First for Education Ltd, based in Stourbridge. Other highest paid agencies included ABC Teachers Ltd at £440,000 and Monarch Education at £322,918.

It was also revealed that £2.14 million was spent on agency staff across the borough from September 2014 to February 2015.

Schools in Dudley control their own budgets and decide when agency staff need to be brought in.

Abdul Qadus, a former member of the children's board at Dudley Council, was shocked by the figures. He said: "It appears that we are becoming an agency culture and it isn't good. Millions of pounds are being spent and when I was a governor I questioned this. It is quite concerning but seems a general pattern."

"If they had proper full time staff then I feel money would be better spent than having agency teachers, which can be confusing for the children."

Councillor Anne Millward, cabinet member for children's services, said: "This is money spent by schools, not by the council directly. Supply costs generally have increased and will vary from year to year, depending on the issues faced by schools in relation to teacher absence."

Landlord moves on after 28 years



Camra branch chairman Ryan Hunt and Tim Batham thank Mel Wood, centre, for his work at The Vine

THE landlord of a popular Black Country pub has been presented with an award by real ale fans.

Mervyn 'Mel' Wood has left the Vine, otherwise known as the Bull and Bladder, in Delph Road, Brierley Hill, after more than 25 years.

Members of the Dudley and South Staffordshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale visited the pub to present a framed certificate to mark his 28 years at the Batham's Brewery tap.

"We said a massive and heartfelt thank you to Mel," said branch chairman Ryan Hunt, who made the presentation. "Under his supervision, the Batham's Brewery tap has enjoyed uninterrupted Good Beer Guide status and has twice been crowned the Dudley and South Staffordshire Camra pub of the year in 1996 and 2016."

Tom Comyns is moving from Dudley's Lamp Tavern to take over the iconic pub.

HISTORIC artefacts that were on show at Dudley Museum are to go under the hammer for thousands of pounds.

The Chinese and Japanese pieces, bought by the Trust of the late Dudley MP Brooke Robinson, are being sold after the closure of the town's old museum in the town centre.

The centrepiece of the collection is a Chinese Qing Dynasty Qianlong Buddhist Emblem Altar Vessel expected to fetch up to £20,000.

There is no room for the 92-pieces at the Archives building in Tipton Road where the museum's collections have been moved.

The Brooke Robinson Museum Trust is to use cash from the sale to buy pieces more suited to the Brooke Robinson story. It is working with the council on

plans to celebrate the former MP's life at a display in the town centre.

Colin Knipe, a Brooke Robinson trustee, said: "We are disposing of some items that were not part of Brooke Robinson's personal collection, in order to acquire items that are more relevant to the district and his career, and to improve the display."

Brooke Robinson was Conservative MP for Dudley from 1886 to 1906 and also served as coroner. He was an art collector and benefactor whose legacy included the Town Hall and museum.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for planning and economic development, said: "The council will not benefit financially in any way. We are working with the trustees." Fieldings Auctioneers hosts the sale on Saturday.

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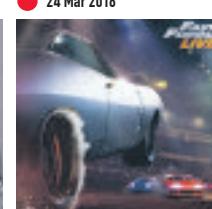
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Noddy and I have had a hell of a life

You'd expect him to be the showiest of all of the members of Slade. After all, Dave Hill made a career from modelling silver wigs and platform boots. He was the brightest star in Slade's firmament, the one who'd dress most outrageously, who'd model a great scooping fringe for more years than was sensible.

Yet Dave Hill is as far removed from the caricature as is possible. Our scheduled 15-minute chat turns into 45. And the subjects aren't just Rolls Royces and drink, six number one singles and outrageous apparel - Dave talks about depression and importance of our shared history, about his deep, deep affection for the Black Country and a long-lasting marriage.

The man nicknamed Superyob who rocked the world with Slade is more sensitive and thoughtful than anyone might imagine. Yes, there's Merry Xmas Everybody and six smash LPs in his new book, So Here It Is, which is published this month by Unbound. But there's also talk about post-War Britain and his office job at Tarmac, about sliding into depression during his later years and suffering a stroke, there's an honest assessment of Slade's split - to paraphrase, everyone started to hate Noddy, though Dave and Nod are the best of pals again now - and there's the slow revealing of a gentle soul.

Superyob? Dave Hill. You're having a larf.

"I was born in a castle and then grew up in a council house in Wolverhampton. I had a smashing mum and dad but things were tough growing up in post-War Britain. My life really changed when I heard rock'n'roll music. I said goodbye to an office job at Tarmac and never looked back. I played in various groups before fame came knocking at my door.

"Slade's success didn't happen overnight but boy, were we big when we took off! We had 23 top twenty hits and six number one singles. Three of these went straight to the number one spot - a first, not even matched by The Beatles. Topping it all was Merry Xmas Everybody, which sold over one million copies. We also had six smash LPs, and one time had the number one and two spots on the LP chart. All this made Slade the biggest band in the UK in the 70s, and we were massive all over the world, too.

"Slade had some great years but fashions change and the break-up of the original band was heartbreaking. I thought that would be it for me.

"I battled through depression and got over a stroke, and decided to carry on



Back in the day –
Slade in the early 70s

doing the thing
which I do best: I
went back on the
road with Slade.
I've seen more
of the world, and
more fans, in the last
25 years than I did when
the band were at their most
famous."

Dave's autobiography, inevitably, was created in his beloved Black Country. He met a writer, from Walsall, who was a big Slade fan and encouraged him to jot down his memories. Publishers were slow on the uptake so they took it to Unbound, the pledge-funded organisation. Dave smashed his target - achieving 116 per cent funding from 564 backers.

"It was a nice process. If I'd been with a different publisher, they'd have been telling me what to write. With these guys, I was just allowed to get on with it. I worked with a ghostwriter, he was from Wednesbury. It was important to do it that way. I was working with somebody who understood the way I talk and who related to my upbringing."

Dave didn't just want to write about the good times. He wanted to tell the truth, to write down his experience of mental health issues.

"The Slade years were incredible. We had the most original Christmas song. We influenced a lot of people. Those years took me to destinations I wouldn't have

dreamed of. Everything was good until the break-up of the band.

"I didn't know what I was going to do. But I'd got a good wife and three children. I had a lot to carry on for."

Dave is more candid in his book about the break-up than others have been.

"I spoke to Nod about it, he keeps in touch. He said nobody's really written how the split was. So I did my best to write about how it was. Nod and myself have one heck of a life. We have a love for each other. We didn't agree with everything but we agreed with one thing, to be in a great band. We achieved that. Slade were a great rock'n'roll band. We had uniqueness and an honesty."

"With Nod, there was the realisation that he was going to go. And back then, when I weighed it up, maybe there wasn't any love for him in the band any more. He had to do what he had to do. In the early days it was like we were glued together. But we loved it and we're mates now. We'll always be known for it, especially Nod and myself."

Dave's book is equally remarkable for his exploration of depression, which followed routine surgery.

"I was in a dark place for a while. I had two years of really bad depression and was wondering whether I would ever feel good again. It was scary, it was hard on the family. I didn't trust medication. I found the right person who helped me, a great psychiatrist, who knew about medication. She was a specialist in her area and great to talk to. She told me I was 100 per cent depressed."

The joy returned when he listed to some old 60s music in his car. "The music gave me that joy inside. I went on a shopping spree buying clothes, I was Dave Hill again, that bloke, going out and getting stuff. The dark areas faded away. But I've wrote about that in the book."

Andy Richardson

● **So Here It Is: How the Boy From Wolverhampton Rocked the World With Slade**, by Dave Hill, is published by Unbound on November 16.

● For more entertainment news and reviews see **The Ticket** in your Express & Star every Friday.

*I was in a dark
place – I had two
years of really
bad depression*



Wolverhampton's Lions of Dissent



Lions of Dissent are the complete package

Lions of Dissent self produce and create everything themselves, including the lyrics, music, studio production, video production, art design and website as well as screen printing T-shirts and curating photo shoots.

Currently with 10 members, the group which formed in 2015 features a creative director, songwriters, musicians, producers, filmmakers, web developers and graphic designers.

Speaking about the group's collective philosophy, lead songwriter Tim Baker says 'It's not only through absolute necessity, but an essential part of the ethos that we create everything ourselves – constructing and expanding our own universe piece by piece and

inviting everybody to step inside as they pass us by'.

Having gained praise from the likes of Simon Raymonde (owner of Bella Union Records), Anton Newcombe (Brian Jonestown Massacre) and Simone Marie Butler (Primal Scream) the group have also attracted international interest.

After releasing seven videos on YouTube, tracks such as X Y Z and Heaven Sent have amassed over 6000 views to build an audience and reputation. This has allowed them to release their debut EP 'What Would It Feel Like To Be Free' this week on their own label Lion Rebel Recordings.

Now Lions of Dissent have announced their debut live show taking place in their home city at the Newhampton Arts Centre tomorrow night (Friday).

Wolf Alice ready to rock Academy

The gig of the week sees Wolf Alice in concert at Birmingham's O2 Academy on Thursday, November 16.

Since their debut My Love Is Cool in 2015 and a storming Glastonbury set last year, this London outfit have become the UK's premier indie rock band – blending shoegaze guitar swirl with grungy hard rock. The four piece fronted by Ellie Rowsell, pictured, a month ago released second album Visions of a Life and won more fans with an appearance on Jools Holland's TV show.

And it's worth turning up early to catch their tour supports Superfood

– returning to their home city – and New York trio Sunflower Bean.

Fans have two chances to catch singer-songwriter Newton Faulkner, at the O2 Institute in Digbeth, Birmingham, on Saturday or Wolverhampton Slade Rooms on Tuesday. He has released sixth studio album, Hit The Ground Running.

Mods will be out in force at the Robin 2 for a double bill of Secret Affair and The Chords on Saturday. Expect to be dazzled by the light show when space rockers The Hawklords, featuring ex-members of Hawkwind, play the Bilston venue on Sunday. John 'Drumbo'

French, a former colleague of experimental blues artist Captain Beefheart brings an incarnation of the late captain's Magic Band to the Robin on Monday during their farewell tour.

Afro Celt Sound System and The Dhol Foundation are at Birmingham Town Hall tomorrow (Friday) and The Bard of Barking Billy Bragg is at that venue on Saturday.

Three legends perform in Birmingham including, on Monday, Blondie (Arena Birmingham) and Van Morrison (Symphony Hall) then Alice Cooper on Tuesday (Arena Birmingham).

Perfect role for Strictly's Danny

Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sunset Boulevard is at Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday to Saturday with Hollyoaks actor and Strictly Come Dancing finalist Danny Mac.

Danny plays Joe Gillis, a down-on-his-luck writer who stumbles into the deluded world of faded silent movie queen Norma Desmond, played by stage star Ria Jones. The show features the songs The Perfect Year and With One Look. For tickets see birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.



The comedy just keeps on coming

It's been a funny old autumn, with comedy festivals in Wolverhampton and Birmingham, but the laughs keep on coming.

Following his sold-out show at Wolverhampton Civic Hall this week, Liverpudlian comic, actor and presenter John Bishop brings his Winging It tour to Arena Birmingham tomorrow (Friday) for the first of three consecutive nights.

Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre hosts Brummie Jo Enright with her Erdington Girl show tomorrow night. Comedian and activist Mark Thomas brings his Show That Gambles On The Future, his vision of what the world could hold in store, to the MAC in Cannon Hill Park, Edgbaston, next Thursday, November 16. The following night James Cook's new stand-up show Too Many Jameses is at the MAC's Hexagon Theatre.

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CHOICE



Alfie Boe

Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance 2017 (BBC1, 9pm)

The Royal Albert Hall in London hosts the annual Festival of Remembrance. Huw Edwards narrates the event as the likes of Tom Odell, Alfie Boe and Lesley Garrett take to the iconic stage alongside the Queen's Colour Squadron and the Royal Marines Band. They will be paying tribute to the men and women who have died in combat since the First World War. The event concludes with the now-iconic poppy petal shower, which sees thousands of poppy petals rain down on the assembled audience - among which sits Her Majesty the Queen - as a symbol of each life lost. Tomorrow morning the annual National Service of Remembrance will take place at the Cenotaph and will be covered by BBC One from 10.20am.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.15** Saturday Kitchen Live. **10.45** Lord Mayor's Show 2017. **12.05** Football Focus. **12.35** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Rugby League World Cup. **2.00** Live International Rugby Union. Scotland v Samoa (Kick-off 2.30pm). **3.45** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.00** Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme. **5.35** BBC News. **5.45** Regional Programme. **5.55** Pointless Celebrities. **6.45** Strictly Come Dancing. The pro-celebrity couples face yet another round of high-pressure performances, as the competition enters its eighth weekend. Only nine duos remain, and Claudia Winkleman and Tess Daly present as the pairs once more take to the dancefloor to demonstrate whether a week of rigorous training has had any impact on their skills as dancers. This time, though, the pressure is higher than ever, as anyone who drops out of the contest this weekend will miss out on the chance to dance at Blackpool Tower Ballroom next week. As ever, judges Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell preside over the contest, awarding each star a score that could give them a crucial lead in avoiding elimination following public vote. **8.10** Casualty. Ethan's secret seems to have been discovered, but Connie's reluctance to treat her condition gives him a more urgent problem to tackle. **9.00** Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance 2017. Huw Edwards hosts the annual Festival of Remembrance at London's Royal Albert Hall. **10.40** BBC News: Weather. National Lottery Update. **11.00** Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes looks after a robotic baby that has been given to Dermot and Maria to help them prepare for their new arrival, and Cathy develops a crush on her psychology lecturer. (R) **11.30** The NFL Show. Mark Chapman is joined by former players Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to present highlights of Thursday night's game, plus a look at the major stories shaping the NFL world. **12.00** Film: Three Fugitives. (1989) **1.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **6.45** Animal Park Summer Special. **7.30** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **8.00** Deadly 60. (R) **8.30** Show Me What You're Made Of. **9.00** Saturday Mash-Up!: Two Minutes Silence. **11.00** Rick Stein's Long Weekends. (R) **12.00** Nigella: At My Table. (R) **12.30** Italy Unpacked. (R) **3.15** Mastermind. (R) **3.45** Cycling - Track World Cup. **4.45** Live International Rugby Union. Wales v Australia (Kick-off 5.15pm). John Inverdale introduces coverage from the Principality Stadium, as the hosts begin their autumn international campaign. **7.30** International Rugby Union. England v Argentina. Jason Mohammad presents highlights of the autumn international at Twickenham. With commentary by Andrew Cotter and Brian Moore, and analysis by Jeremy Guscott. **8.30** Dad's Army. A night at the cinema with the rest of the platoon and a black-milked toasted cheese sandwich make Mainwaring have an unusual dream in which he is Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo. Comedy first broadcast in 1972, starring Arthur Lowe, John Le Mesurier and Clive Dunn. (R) **9.00** Film: Effie Gray. (2014) Premiere. A Victorian woman is trapped in a loveless marriage to a celebrated art critic from the age of 19. She becomes a model for a painter her husband is promoting and falls in love with him. Inspired by the relationship and aided by a respected writer, she creates scandal by becoming the first woman to seek a divorce. Fact-based period drama, starring Dakota Fanning and Emma Thompson. **10.40** QI XL. Bill Bailey, Jan Ravens and Grayson Perry join regular panelist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig for an extended edition of the unconventional quiz. **11.25** Film: Private Peaceful. (2003) Two brothers' relationship is changed for ever when they serve in the First World War. Drama based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, starring Jack O'Connell. **1.00** Film: Free Men. (2011) An Algerian black marketeer in Nazi-occupied France is forced to become a spy, but ends up joining a resistance cell. Second World War drama, with Tahar Rahim and Michael Lonsdale. **2.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. (R) **7.30** Scrabbled!: Scrambled! The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrabbled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrabbled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrabbled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** Scrabbled!: Wishart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with Jane Martin. **11.30** Gino's Italian Coastal Escape. (R) **11.55** The Harbour. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** The X Factor. (R) **2.20** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **2.50** Midsummer Murders. (R) **4.40** Catchphrase. (R) **5.25** The Cruise. (R) **5.55** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R) **6.25** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.30** ITV News: Weather. **6.45** New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, including a drone flying into a child's face, a unicycling Scotsman and a builder being crushed by a wall. **7.10** Ninja Warrior UK. Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the third heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in this obstacle-course challenge. (R) **8.10** The X Factor Live. Dermot O'Leary hosts as the talent contest enters its third weekend of live eliminations, and the remaining acts step on-stage to face scrutiny at the hands of the judges. **9.40** The Jonathan Ross Show. Jamaican singer, model and actress Grace Jones visits the studio, along with former Great British Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain and comedian Micky Flanagan. Plus, music by Stormzy. **10.40** ITV News: Weather. **10.50** World Cup Qualifier Playoff Highlights. Jacqui Oatley presents action from all four first-leg matches, including Northern Ireland v Switzerland at Windsor Park and Denmark v Republic of Ireland at the Parken Stadium. **11.55** Film: Run Fat Boy Run. (2007) Romantic comedy, with Simon Pegg and Thandie Newton. **1.30** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **6.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **6.50** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.15** Frasier. (R) **7.40** Frasier. (R) **8.05** Fraiser. (R) **8.30** The Big Bang Theory. **8.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.20** The Simpsons. (R) **9.50** The Simpsons. (R) **10.15** The Simpsons. (R) **10.45** The Simpsons. (R) **11.15** The Simpsons. (R) **11.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.20** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.50** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.25** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) **3.30** A Place in the Sun. (R) **4.00** Best Laid Plans. **5.00** Grand Designs. (R) **6.00** Channel 4 News. **6.30** Volatile Earth: Killer Floods. Scientists use state-of-the-art technology to investigate theories that suggest catastrophic floods raged across the Earth thousands of years ago, shaping the planet's landscapes. Aerial photography is combined with the latest forensic techniques to assess bizarre landscapes in America, Iceland and the floor of the English Channel, which might all have been formed by huge floods. Previously shown on More4. **7.30** Formula 1: Brazilian Grand Prix Qualifying - Highlights. Steve Jones presents action from the battle for pole position in the 19th and penultimate round of the season, which takes place at Interlagos in São Paulo. Recently crowned world champion Lewis Hamilton won here for the first time last year, becoming the first British victor since Jenson Button in 2012. **9.00** Film: Terminator Genisys. (2015) Premiere. A soldier fighting in a post-apocalyptic war against living machines is sent back in time to prevent an attempt to change the past - but when he arrives, he finds that history has been changed beyond recognition - and that a plot is being hatched by an unexpected enemy to destroy the future of the human race. Sci-fi adventure sequel, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Emilia Clarke. **11.30** Film: GI Joe: Retaliation. (2013) An elite military team battles a terrorist organisation that has replaced the US president with an imposter. Action adventure sequel, with Dwayne Johnson. **1.40** The Last Leg. (R) **2.30** Hollyoaks.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. **10.40** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.40** Santa Makes You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **12.40** Film: Operation Christmas. (2016) Drama, starring Tricia Helfer. **2.25** Film: All I Want for Christmas. (2013) Festive fantasy, starring Melissa Gagnier. **4.05** Film: A Christmas Song. (2012) Romantic drama, with Natasha Henstridge and Brian Hagan. **5.05** News Update. **5.10** Film: A Christmas Song. (2012) Concluded. **6.10** Film: The Nine Lives of Christmas. (2014) A fireman who prefers being single adopts a stray cat, but having a pet makes him long for some human company. Romantic comedy, starring Brandon Routh. **7.10** 5 News Update. **7.15** Film: The Nine Lives of Christmas. (2014) Concluded. **7.50** NCIS: New Orleans. A petty officer is found dead in a sports arena clutching a tranquilliser gun, and the team discovers the killing is related to a kidnapping case from the past. **8.45** NCIS: New Orleans. A naval lieutenant is tortured and murdered, and the case takes a personal turn for Sebastian when he is kidnapped by the killer and forced to assist in a prison break. **9.40** 5 News Weekend. **9.45** Live Boxing. Josh Taylor v Miguel Vazquez. Coverage of the WBC Silver Super-Lightweight title bout from Royal Highland Centre in Edinburgh. Taylor is undefeated in his professional career thus far, having recorded 10 consecutive victories that include nine wins by stoppage, but he faces arguably his toughest opponent in Vazquez. Though the Mexican may perhaps be on the slide in the tail end of his career he is vastly experienced, having previously held the IBF World Lightweight title from 2010 to 2014, while he boasts a record of 39 wins against just five losses. **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from Leagues One and Two, including Doncaster Rovers v Rotherham United, Rochdale v Wigan Athletic, and Carlisle United v Yeovil Town. **12.05** SuperCasino. **3.10** When Calls the Heart. (R) **4.40** Access. **4.50** Great Artists. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **6.00** Film: Carry On Fellow That Camel. (1967) **11.50** Wycliffe. **1.00** Foyle's War. **5.05** Midsummer Murders. **11.05** The Syndicate. **12.10** Jane Eyre. **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen. **2.30** Teleshopping. **ITV3** **11.00** Film: Carry On Fellow That Camel. (1967) **11.50** Wycliffe. **1.00** Foyle's War. **5.05** Midsummer Murders. **11.05** The Syndicate. **12.10** Jane Eyre. **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen. **ITV4** **11.20** Fishing Impossible. **12.25** The Big Fish Off. **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Wincanton. Coverage of today's race meetings at Wincanton and Doncaster. **4.00** The Sweeney. **5.00** The Car Chasers. **6.00** Storage Wars. **6.25** Football's Greatest: Johan Cruyff. **6.45** Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. Coverage of the second semi-final from the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. **11.15** Film: 6 Bullets. (2012) **12.15** FYI Daily. **12.20** Film: 6 Bullets. (2012) **1.30** The Classic Car Show. **2.30** Football's Greatest: Bobby Charlton. **2.45** IT4 Nightscreen. **3.00** Teleshopping. **11.00** Film: The Goldbergs. **1.25** Film: Johnny English Reborn. (2011) **3.30** The Big Bang Theory. **9.00** Film: The Bourne Legacy. (2012) **11.40** Gogglebox. **1.50** The Inbetweeners. **2.50** Rude Tube. **3.45** 2 Broke Girls. **4.45** How I Met Your Mother. **Film4** **11.00** The Black Knight. (1954) **1.00** Short Circuit 2. (1988) **3.10** Song of the Sea. (2014) **5.05** Picture Perfect. (1997) **7.05** Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb. (2014) **9.00** The World's End. (2013) **11.10** 30 Days of Night. (2007) **1.25** The Anomaly. (2014) **3.25** Close

DIGITAL

BBC Four **7.00** Natural World: Honey Badgers - Masters of Mayhem. **8.00** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins. **9.00** Know Who You Are. **11.35** The Vietnam War. **12.30** Film: Operation Christmas. (2016) Drama, starring Tricia Helfer. **2.25** Film: All I Want for Christmas. (2013) Festive fantasy, starring Melissa Gagnier. **4.05** Film: A Christmas Song. (2012) Romantic drama, with Natasha Henstridge and Brian Hagan. **5.05** News Update. **5.10** Film: A Christmas Song. (2012) Concluded. **6.10** Film: The Nine Lives of Christmas. (2014) A fireman who prefers being single adopts a stray cat, but having a pet makes him long for some human company. Romantic comedy, starring Brandon Routh. **7.10** 5 News Update. **7.15** Film: The Nine Lives of Christmas. (2014) Concluded. **7.50** NCIS: New Orleans. A petty officer is found dead in a sports arena clutching a tranquilliser gun, and the team discovers the killing is related to a kidnapping case from the past. **8.45** NCIS: New Orleans. A naval lieutenant is tortured and murdered, and the case takes a personal turn for Sebastian when he is kidnapped by the killer and forced to assist in a prison break. **9.40** 5 News Weekend. **9.45** Live Boxing. Josh Taylor v Miguel Vazquez. Coverage of the WBC Silver Super-Lightweight title bout from Royal Highland Centre in Edinburgh. Taylor is undefeated in his professional career thus far, having recorded 10 consecutive victories that include nine wins by stoppage, but he faces arguably his toughest opponent in Vazquez. Though the Mexican may perhaps be on the slide in the tail end of his career he is vastly experienced, having previously held the IBF World Lightweight title from 2010 to 2014, while he boasts a record of 39 wins against just five losses. **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from Leagues One and Two, including Doncaster Rovers v Rotherham United, Rochdale v Wigan Athletic, and Carlisle United v Yeovil Town. **12.05** SuperCasino. **3.10** When Calls the Heart. (R) **4.40** Access. **4.50** Great Artists. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **6.00** Film: Carry On Fellow That Camel. (1967) **11.50** Wycliffe. **1.00** Foyle's War. **5.05** Midsummer Murders. **11.05** The Syndicate. **12.10** Jane Eyre. **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen. **2.30** Teleshopping. **ITV2** **11.35** Film: See Spot Run (2001) **12.25** FYI Daily. **12.30** Film: See Spot Run (2001) **1.30** Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold. (2009) **2.30** Daily. **2.35** Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold. (2009) **3.40** Film: Bean (1997) **4.40** FYI Daily. **4.45** Film: Bean (1997) **5.20** Film: Clash of the Titans. (2010) **6.20** FYI Daily. **6.25** Film: Clash of the Titans (2010) **7.25** Film: Pacific Rim. (2013) **8.25** FYI Daily. **8.30** Film: Pacific Rim (2013) **10.00** Celebrity Juice. **10.50** Family Guy. **12.45** American Dad! **1.35** Timewasters. **2.05** Viral Tap. **2.50** Teleshopping. **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen. **ITV3** **11.00** Film: Carry On Fellow That Camel. (1967) **11.50** Wycliffe. **1.00** Foyle's War. **5.05** Midsummer Murders. **11.05** The Syndicate. **12.10** Jane Eyre. **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen. **2.30** Teleshopping. **ITV4** **11.20** Fishing Impossible. **12.25** The Big Fish Off. **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Wincanton. Coverage of today's race meetings at Wincanton and Doncaster. **4.00** The Sweeney. **5.00** The Car Chasers. **6.00** Storage Wars. **6.25** Football's Greatest: Johan Cruyff. **6.45** Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. Coverage of the second semi-final from the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. **11.15** Film: 6 Bullets. (2012) **12.15** FYI Daily. **12.20** Film: 6 Bullets. (2012) **1.30** The Classic Car Show. **2.30** Football's Greatest: Bobby Charlton. **2.45** IT4 Nightscreen. **3.00** Teleshopping. **11.00** Film: The Goldbergs. **1.25** Film: Johnny English Reborn. (2011) **3.30** The Big Bang Theory. **9.00** Film: The Bourne Legacy. (2012) **11.40** Gogglebox. **1.50** The Inbetweeners. **2.50** Rude Tube. **3.45** 2 Broke Girls. **4.45** How I Met Your Mother. **Film4** **11.00** The Black Knight. (1954) **1.00** Short Circuit 2. (1988) **3.10** Song of the Sea. (2014) **5.05** Picture Perfect. (1997) **7.05** Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb. (2014) **9.00** The World's End. (2013) **11.10** 30 Days of Night. (2007) **1.25** The Anomaly. (2014) **3.25** Close

SATURDAY'S TV NOVEMBER 11

NEWLY REFURBISHED PARK LANE TAVERN



They always say never judge a book by its cover so we decided to check out The Park Lane Tavern in Colley Gate, and I have to say what was on offer in there was a total surprise.



It serves a carvery option 7 days a week from midday which consists of a choice of 4 meats, turkey, beef, pork and gammon and accompanied by stuffing, Yorkshire puddings and up to 12 vegetables, topped off with what they call their "secret recipe gravy" known also as what mother used to make! All this for just £4.99 for a lunchtime meal or £5.99 evenings and Saturdays and £7.99 for Sunday lunch represents extremely good value by today's standards.



They also don't forget their mini diners with 'Kids Eat Free' Monday to Saturday between 3pm and 6pm and during school holidays it's All Day Monday to Saturday.

But it doesn't stop there they also have a full main menu consisting of the classic pub favourites such as steaks, mixed grills, burgers and fish and chips, where the fish would not be out of place in any issue of 'Moby Dick'. To finish is there very tempting dessert menu, that's if you have room after the size of meals you get at The Park Lane Tavern.

Then if that's not enough choice for you you can also choose for the breakfast which is served Friday, Saturday and Sunday 08.30am until 11.00am. Their breakfast is a buffet style 'All you can eat' with enough choice to satisfy any diner from eggs 2 ways, bacon, sausage, mushrooms, baked beans, hash browns, black pudding, grilled fresh tomatoes, toast & fried bread. There's even

jam for your toast if you still not full after all that.

Half Price Monday

They also host special evenings like their 'Half Price Monday' which has proven to be very popular, and why not, already reasonably priced selected main meals off their main menu (which includes steaks) at half price served between 5pm and 8pm every Monday. Also their psychic evenings where for £15 you get a reading from a medium and a carvery, for those believers amongst you that must be a bargain.

You get a very friendly feeling when you enter The Park Lane Tavern and that's mostly down to the staff. Happy to see you and always keen to help. They have a lot of regular customers and it's been known for a customer's drink to be poured and waiting for them before they reach the bar, you don't see that at many places nowadays.

There are no airs or graces at The Park Lane Tavern, you get delicious food at great prices served by happy staff in a comfortable environment. No wonder this place has people returning time after time.

SUNDAY'S TV NOVEMBER 12

CHOICE



Elton John

Elton John: The Nation's Favourite Song (ITV, 9pm)

For a fan of the piano man, choosing your favourite song from his back catalogue is like being asked to pick your favourite child. Where does one even begin with such a task? How do you devise a shortlist, discarding potential classics along the way? Whatever the answer, ITV has attempted to make us do just that, and now it's revealing the results of a nationwide poll to unearth the 20 most popular of Elton's tunes. But what will make it to the top of the list? Candle in the Wind is perhaps his most famous work, particularly because it was revamped by him and lyricist Bernie Taupin following Princess Diana's death, but there are plenty to more to go at.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 10.20 Remembrance Sunday: The Centrepiece. 12.30 Women at War: 100 Years of Service. 1.30 BBC News: Weather. 1.45 Flog It! (R) 2.05 Film: War Horse. (2011) First World War drama, starring Jeremy Irvine. 4.20 Songs of Praise. 4.55 Blue Planet II. (R) 5.55 BBC News.

6.10 Regional Programme.

6.20 **Countryfile.** A special episode for Remembrance Sunday, in which Ellie Harrison discovers how a rural environment can be therapeutic for servicemen and women returning from conflict. She also investigates the vital role played by female canal workers during the Second World War, where Adam Henson visits a school that is teaching farming skills to transform students' lives.

7.20 **Strictly Come Dancing – The Results.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal the results of last night's viewers' votes, and another couple leaves the contest.

8.00 **Blue Planet II.** Creatures that live on coral reefs, including groupers, small predators that scientists believe are as intelligent as chimpanzees. These creatures have a remarkable aptitude for communication to the point where they can interact with other species including octopi and work together to catch prey. Plus, footage of a vast spawning event involving several different species of fish, coral and invertebrates, and time-lapse photography of coral polyps growing and dying, creating a structure visible from space.

9.00 **Howards End.** New series. Period drama based on EM Forster's novel about the lives of three English families at the beginning of the 20th century.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 **Alan Shearer: Dementia, Football And Me.** The former England international looks into the potential link between football and dementia, examining some of the latest scientific evidence from British researchers.

11.30 **The Women's Football Show.** A look at the biggest issues in the women's game.

12.05 **Ronny Chieng: International Student.** 12.35 Weather for the Week Ahead. 12.40 BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 Coast. (R) 6.50 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) 7.35 Great British Garden Revival. (R) 8.35 Countryfile. (R) 9.30 Live Rugby League World Cup. 1.00 International Rugby Union. (R) 2.00 Live Tennis: ATP World Tour Finals. Coverage of the afternoon session on day one from The O2 in London. 4.30 Cycling: Track Cycling World Cup. Live coverage of the third and final day from Manchester.

6.00 **Remembrance Sunday: The Centrepiece.** David Dimbleby presents highlights of the Service from Whitehall, attended by the Prince of Wales.

7.00 **Big Life Fix: Children in Need Special.** One-off special in which Simon Reeve is joined by leading engineers and designers to invent life-changing solutions for three children with severe disabilities. Eight-year-old Josh was born completely blind, a condition that prevents him playing in with his classmates at break time. Eight-year-old Ayala, who has cerebral palsy, would love to play with her twin sister on an equal footing, and 10-year-old Aman struggles with poor memory after suffering brain damage in a car accident. Can the experts help her and the other children improve their lives? (R)

8.00 **Robot Wars.** An experienced contestant returns to defend his legacy in the fourth heat, battling alongside five other contenders through a series of group battles and knock-out rounds.

9.00 **Louis Theroux: Transgender Kids.** Louis travels to San Francisco, where he spends time with children who are undergoing gender-reassignment treatment at UCSF Hospital's Child and Adolescent Gender Centre. (R)

10.00 **Snowfall.** Teddy is given once last chance to put things right. Franklin's uncle introduces him to a potential mentor, and Oso and Lucia go in search of a new business partner.

10.45 **Mock the Week.** Ed Gamble, Milton Jones, Miles Jupp, Nish Kumar and Felicity Ward join host Dara O Briain and regular Hugh Dennis for the topical comedy show. (R)

11.15 **Rugby League World Cup.** Action from the day's final group-stage games.

12.15 **Film: The Human Factor.** (1979) 2.10 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) 3.10 Holby City. (R) 4.10 This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. 6.10 The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) 6.45 Super 4. (R) 7.00 Mission Employable. (R) 7.05 Oddbods. (R) 7.10 Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) 7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled 7.35 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) 7.40 Scrabbed!: Ben 10. (R) 8.10 Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) 8.30 Scrambled!: Make It Pop. (R) 9.00 Scrambled!: Wishart. (R) 9.25 ITV News. 9.30 Film: Columbo: Butterfly in Shades of Grey. (1993) 11.25 Tipping Point. (R) 12.25 ITV News: Weather. 12.35 The X Factor Live. (R) 1.55 Midsummer Murders. (R) 4.00 Prince Harry and Meghan: Truly, Madly, Deeply. (R) 5.00 Sheridan. (R)

6.00 **Regional Programme:** Weather.

6.10 ITV News: Weather.

6.30 **The Chase: Celebrity Special.** Martin Roberts, Tracy Edwards, Debbie McGee and Duncan James answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh.

7.30 **The X Factor Live.** The third weekend of live shows concludes, with the remaining acts competing to impress the judges and audience and maintain their place in the show. The most popular act of the weekend will win a special prize that they cannot buy. Presented by Dermot O'Leary.

9.00 **Elton John: The Nation's Favourite Song.** A countdown of the singer's 20 most popular songs, chosen by ITV viewers to celebrate his 70th birthday. Elton discusses the stories behind the tracks in a candid conversation with David Walliams, while celebrity fans and friends reveal what their favourite numbers mean to them. With contributions from Ed Sheeran, Annie Lennox, Stephen Fry and Elton's longtime songwriting partner Bernie Taupin.

10.30 ITV News: Weather.

10.45 **Unbelievable Moments Caught on Camera.** Alastair Stewart presents a second selection of extraordinary footage. (R)

11.45 **Play to the Whistle.** Holly Willoughby hosts the sports-based comedy panel show, in which two teams go head to head in quizzes and physical games. (R)

12.20 **Jackpot247.** 3.00 Motorsport UK. 3.50 ITV Nightshift. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 2.45 The Supervet. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Kevin Can Wait. 6.25 Kevin Can Wait. 6.50 Kevin Can Wait. 7.15 Frasier. (R) 7.40 Frasier. (R) 8.05 The Simpsons. (R) 8.30 The Simpsons. (R) 9.00 The Simpsons. (R) 9.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 Simpsons Day. (R) 12.55 Simpsons Day. (R) 1.25 Simpsons Day. (R) 1.55 Simpsons Day. 2.20 Simpsons Day. (R) 2.50 Simpsons Day. (R) 3.20 Simpsons Day. (R) 3.50 Simpsons Day. (R) 4.15 Simpsons Day. (R) 4.45 Film: Men in Black. (1997) Sci-fi comedy, starring Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones.

6.30 **Channel 4 News.**

7.00 **Britain's Forgotten Army.** Documentary about the thousands of Chinese workers who supported Allied forces in the First World War by digging trenches, maintaining vehicles and dismantling unexploded bombs, but whose vital work went largely unrecognised. The programme uses recently discovered letters, diaries and documents to explore the experiences of this workforce, and features contributions from their living descendants.

8.00 **The Queen's Favourite Animals.** Documentary about the queen's love of animals, from the corgis that have been her lifelong companions to thoroughbred racehorses. The programme features contributions from childhood friends and jockeys who rode her horses to victory, and examines how the queen gained a respected reputation as a champion breeder of not just dogs and horses, but highland cattle.

9.00 **Big Ben: Saving the World's Most Famous Clock.** Documentary about restoration work on the iconic clock tower, which will see the bells silenced for the next four years. Anna Keay, Director of Landmark Trust, goes behind the scenes on this massive project, and talks to Parliament's principal architect and the three clockmakers who have the challenging task of taking the gigantic mechanism apart for the first time in nearly 160 years.

10.30 **Formula 1: Brazilian Grand Prix Highlights.** Steve Jones presents action from the 19th and penultimate round of the season, which took place at Interlagos in São Paulo.

12.45 **Film: Life on the Limit.** (2013) 2.45 **The Supervet.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Little Princess. 6.10 Wanda and the Alien. (R) 6.20 Poppy Cat. (R) 6.35 Wisper. (R) 6.40 Milkshake! Monkey. (R) 6.45 Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) 6.50 Simon. (R) 7.00 Peppa Pig. (R) 7.05 Paw Patrol. (R) 7.15 Bob the Builder. (R) 7.25 Fireman Sam. (R) 7.40 Olly the Little White Van. (R) 7.50 Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) 8.15 Paw Patrol. (R) 8.35 Nella the Princess Knight. (R) 8.50 Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) 9.00 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 9.15 Shimmer and Shine. (R) 9.30 Digby Dragon. (R) 9.45 Peppa Pig. (R) 9.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) 9.58 Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) 11.00 5 News Special: Remembrance Sunday. 11.05 Film: Let It Snow. (2013) 12.50 Film: On Strike for Christmas. (2015) Drama, starring Daphne Zuniga. 2.30 Film: Just in Time for Christmas. (2015) Premiere. Romantic comedy, starring Eloise Mumford and Michael Stahl-David. 4.20 Film: Northpole. (2014) Premiere. Christmas fantasy, starring Tiffani Thiessen. 5.25 5 News Update. 5.30 Film: Northpole. (2014) Concluded.

6.10 **Film: Deck the Halls.** (2006) Two neighbours feud over who has the best Christmas lights and end up resorting to desperate measures to outdo each other. Comedy, starring Danny DeVito.

7.10 **5 News Update.**

7.15 **Film: Deck the Halls.** (2006) Concluded.

8.00 **Rugby on 5: Anglo Welsh Cup Highlights.** Action from the matchday two pool fixtures, which included Ospreys v Wasps, Northampton Saints v Dragons and Scarlets v Exeter Chiefs.

8.55 **5 News Weekend.**

9.00 **MTV EMA 2017: London.** Live coverage of the 24th MTV European Music Awards from Wembley Arena. Rita Ora hosts the show, which features performances by Stormzy, Kehla, the Killers, Demi Lovato, Shawn Mendes, Liam Payne, Travis Scott and Luis Fonsi. Nominees include Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran, Foo Fighters and Rag 'n' Bone Man, while Natalie Dormer, Madison Beer and Sabrina Carpenter are among the stars presenting awards.

10.55 **Before They Were Stars.** (R)

12.50 **Lip Sync Battle UK: Carol Vorderman v Martin Kemp.** (R) 1.15 SuperCasino. 3.10 Film: Another Cinderella Story. (2008) 4.40 Access. 4.55 Great Artists. (R)

DIGITAL

8.00 **BBC Four** 7.00 Only Connect 7.30 University Challenge 8.00 Hedd Wyn: The Lost War 9.00 Shark 10.00 In the Sky at Night 10.30 Horizon: Strange Signals from Outer Space! 11.30 I Was There: The Great War Interviews 12.30 War of Words: Soldier-Poets of the Somme 2.00 Balletboyz – Young Men 3.00 Shark 4.00 Close

ITV2

11.00 The X Factor Live 12.20 Take Me Out 1.35 You've Been Framed! Gold 2.10 Film: Looney Tunes: Back in Action. (2003) 3.05 FYI Daily 3.10 Film: Looney Tunes: Back in Action (2003) 3.50 Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) 4.50 FYI Daily 4.55 Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) 5.50 Film: Jack the Giant Slayer (2013) 6.50 FYI Daily 6.55 Film: Jack the Giant Slayer (2013) 8.00 FYI Daily 9.05 Film: Quantum of Solace (2008) 10.15 Family Guy 11.40 American Dad! 12.40 Film: The Nutty Professor (1996) 1.40 FYI Daily 1.50 Film: The Nutty Professor (1996) 2.30 Teleshopping

ITV3

12.50 Heidi 2.55 Film: Columbo: The Conspirators (1978) 5.00 Agatha Christie's Marple 7.00 Midsummer Murders 9.00 The Syndicate 10.10 Honest 11.10 Film: Chicago (2002) 12.20 FYI Daily 12.25 Film: Cinema (2002) 1.25 Knock 2.20 Mr Selfridge 3.10 Agatha Christie's Marple 4.45 Judge Judy 5.45 ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

11.45 Storage Wars 12.45 Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. The opening session of the final at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry. 1.15 The Car Chasers 5.40 The Sweeney 6.45 Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. The second session of the final at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry. 11.15 Film: Gascoigne (2015) 12.30 FYI Daily 12.35 Film: Gascoigne (2015)

E4

11.00 Made in Chelsea 12.00 Don't Tell the Bride 1.00 The Goldbergs 3.30 The Big Bang Theory: Super Hero Day 8.30 The Big Bang Theory 9.00 Film: The Inbetweeners Movie (2011) 11.00 The Inbetweeners 12.05 Gogglebox

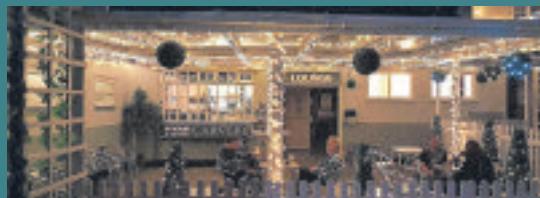
Film4

11.00 Holiday Inn (1941) 1.00 DragonBall Evolution (2009) 2.40 Carry On Regardless (1961) 4.30 Hugo (2011)

6.55 Tomorrow, When the War Began (2010) 9.00 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (2013) 11.45 Priest (2011) 1.30 Storage 24 (2012) 3.20 Close



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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

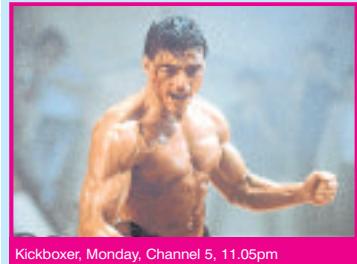
Kickboxer, Channel 5, 11.05pm

A martial arts student witnesses his brother being brutally defeated in the ring by a Thai champion in a fight that leaves him paralysed. Vowing revenge, he seeks out the help of a reclusive master, under whose tutelage he hones his skills until he is ready to confront his enemy. Action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, Dennis Alexio and Haskell V Anderson. (1989)

TUESDAY

Naughty or Nice, Channel 5, 3.10pm

A woman is accidentally given a magic book used by Santa Claus to find out which children have been bad and good. She uses its power to expose the wicked deeds of those around her, but ends up learning more than she would like, getting into conflict with her neighbours and uncovering her boyfriend's secrets. Festive fantasy, starring Hilari Burton and Matt Dallas. (2012)



Kickboxer, Monday, Channel 5, 11.05pm

WEDNESDAY

Christmas Confessions, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A struggling actress who moved to New York to pursue her dreams returns to the small town she escaped years before for the festive season, where a romance with an old acquaintance shows her that the life she left behind may be better than Broadway. Romance, starring Sarah Lancaster. (2015)

THURSDAY

Angels and Ornaments, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A model of a carol singer hanging from a lollipop musician's Christmas tree comes to life in the build-up to the festive season. The living ornament decides to help his owner put a recent break-up behind her by matchmaking her with a childhood friend. Romantic fantasy, starring Jessalyn Gilsig. (2014)

FRIDAY

The Chronicles of Riddick, ITV, 10.40pm

Fugitive Riddick evades capture by bounty hunters and steals their spacecraft, only to run into an even bigger threat – fanatical cult members on a sinister mission to kill or convert anyone who crosses their path. Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Vin Diesel. (2004)

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Legitimate Tommy struggles to leave the past behind

Whether it's being buried alive by a wartime tunnel collapse or beaten to within an inch of his life by Father Hughes' hired muscle, Tommy Shelby has found himself in plenty of tight spots.

However, the Birmingham crime boss might just have bitten off more than he can chew as Steven Knight's acclaimed saga Peaky Blinders returns for a fourth series.

Thomas Murphy, who plays Tommy, said of the new action-packed run: "In the classic gangster arc, the last season was sort of all about the wealth, the house and all that material stuff. This season is sort of a return to the roots."

At the end of the last series, set in 1924, we saw Tommy at what Knight has called the character's "most nihilistic."

Having ascended into high society from his humble beginnings in Small Heath, Tommy seemingly threw his own family under the proverbial bus of the law for the criminal acts he made in the effort to save his captured young son.

Every Shelby except Tommy was arrested at the leader's luxurious countryside manor after they defied the Russians in a jewel heist and blew up a train.

Whether or not they have all wriggled out of the charges will become clear, as the new series begins in December 1925.

Thomas Murphy OBE has now acquired unprecedented legitimacy – but the gangster is a lonely man, estranged from his family and focused on business.

However, when he receives a mysterious letter on Christmas Eve, he realises that his loved-ones and his empire are in danger of growing up.

As the enemy closes in, Tommy flees his country house and returns to the only safe place he knows: Small Heath, the slum where he grew up.

Facing a more determined and sophisticated threat than ever before, the Shelleys must put differences aside, take up arms and fight for survival.

So far, we know little of this new danger other than it is a new criminal organisation "of a different dimension," headed by a ruthless crime boss (Adrien Brody), and according to Knight, it will represent the Shelleys' "biggest threat" in the saga to date.

Knight is thrilled to have Oscar-winner Brody on board as the story develops. He says: "Adrien genuinely was the actor in my head when I wrote the part. I'm sure he will be a formidable presence."

Other new cast members this time around include Aidan Gillen (Game of Thrones) and Charlie Murphy (Happy Valley), who will be joining the likes of Murphy, Helen McCrory, Tom Hardy and Charlotte Riley.

Knight adds: "We have a dream team gathered for series four, coming to us for love of the show, which is great."

"Adrien Brody, Aidan Gillen and Charlie Murphy give us a wealth of talent to work with, and with Tom Hardy and Charlotte Riley returning, we couldn't have hoped for more."



Cillian Murphy stars in Peaky Blinders, Wednesday, BBC2, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Children in Need Rocks the 80s
BBC1, 8.30pm

The first Children in Need telethon was broadcast in 1980 – and now the charity is going back to that decade with a star-studded concert at the SSE Arena, Wembley. Fearne Cotton and Sara Cox introduce performances by acts including A-ha, Bananarama, Boy George, Erasure, Europe, Imagination featuring Lee John, Jason Donovan, Mica Paris, Nick Heyward, OMD and UB40 featuring Ali, Astro and Mickey. And for the younger viewers, there's X Factor winner Louisa Johnson, who will be getting into the Eighties spirit even though she wasn't born until 1998. As well as hearing some much-loved tunes, we'll also be getting all the backstage gossip from Roman Kemp – and a few reminders of how Children in Need has been changing young people's lives for 37 years.

TUESDAY

Live International Football
ITV, 7.30pm

England v Brazil (Kick-off 8.00pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the friendly encounter, which takes place at Wembley Stadium, as Gareth Southgate's men continue their preparations for

next summer's World Cup in Russia. These sides last met back in June 2013 when an entertaining match – the first to be held at the renovated Maracana in Rio de Janeiro – finished 2-2. The teams had also played each other earlier on that year at Wembley, when goals from Wayne Rooney and Frank Lampard gave the Three Lions their first victory over Brazil since March 1990. With analysis from Lee Dixon, Ryan Giggs and Ian Wright, and commentary by Clive Tyldesley and Glenn Hoddle.

WEDNESDAY

DIY SOS: The Million Pound Build for Children in Need
BBC1, 8pm

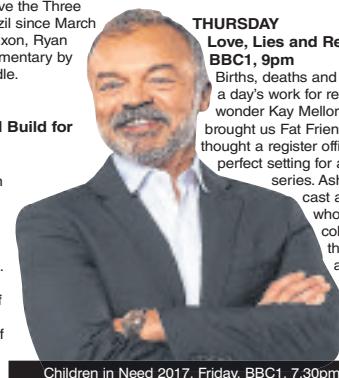
The DIY SOS team descend on Swansea to tackle one of their biggest challenges to date, as they build a centre and supported housing for young people in care and leaving care. This special programme also shares the stories from some of Wales' most vulnerable young people as well as the founder of the Roots Foundation Wales, a charity that supports young

people in and leaving care. The team, with the help of hundreds of volunteers, build a bespoke new centre and transitional flats from the ground up for Roots, a charity, part-funded by BBC Children in Need despite storms and a tight 11-day build schedule.

THURSDAY

Love, Lies and Records
BBC1, 9pm

Births, deaths and marriages – it's all in a day's work for registrars. So, no wonder Kay Mellor, the writer who brought us *Father Ted* and *In the Club*, thought a register office would make the perfect setting for a six-part drama series. Ashley Jensen leads the cast as Kate Dickenson, who is anxious about her colleagues' reaction to the news that she's about to be promoted to Superintendent – although she doesn't anticipate her fellow registrar James making a big announcement



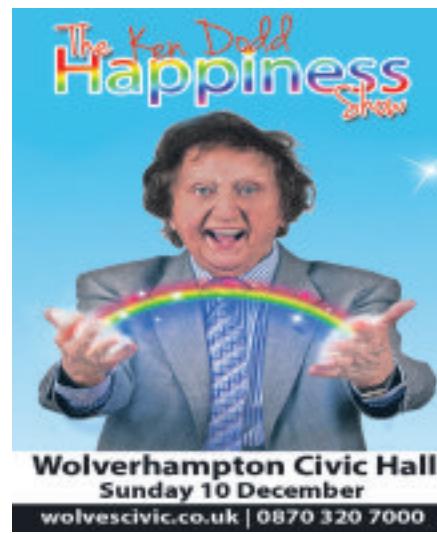
Children in Need 2017, Friday, BBC1, 7.30pm

of his own or a disgruntled co-worker threatening to expose a dark secret from her past. Just to add to the pressure, Kate is dealing with problems at home, not to mention her concerns about an upcoming wedding where the bride and groom don't appear to speak the same language.

FRIDAY

Children in Need 2017
BBC1, 7.30pm

It's that time of the year again when the nation's celebrities urge us to dig deep for a good cause. This year's fundraising extravaganza is hosted by Tess Daly, Graham Norton, Mel Giedroyc, Ade Adepitan, Rochelle and Marvin Humes, and there are plenty of other stars pitching in as well. The highlights include former and current *Blue Peter* presenters taking part in a special edition of *Strictly Come Dancing*, while judge Craig Revel Horwood also crops up as Miss Hannigan with the West End cast of *Annie*. However, even Miss Hannigan will struggle to compete with the evening's other Queen of Mean, Anne Robinson, who returns to host a star-studded round of *The Weakest Link*. There's also a musical interlude courtesy of the *EastEnders*, while the *Countryfile* team swap their wellies for cowboy boots.



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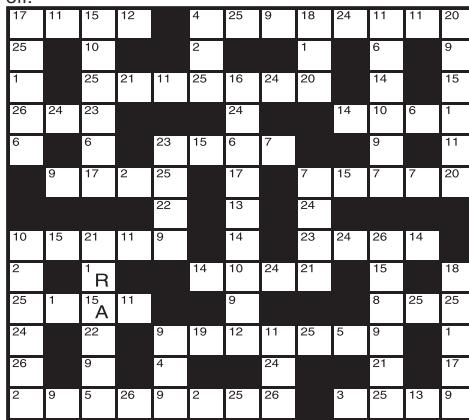


BRAIN GYM

No.455

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	O	R	2	Q	3	G	4	L	5	X	6	D	7	T	8	E	9	F	10	Z	11	W	12	U
14	I	P	15	J	16	C	17	S	18	H	19	M	20	Y	21	B	22	A	23	V	24	N	25	K

Quiz

- On which island is Tokyo?
- Which South American revolutionary was known as The Liberator?
- Who formed the Free French in the UK in WW2?
- Which Gothic horror story is subtitled The Modern Prometheus?
- Which OT prophet was carried to heaven in a fiery chariot?
- For which fish is Canada's Fraser River famous?
- With which football team did multi-millionaire Sir Jack Hayward enjoy a long association?
- In Scandinavian mythology, who were the three goddesses of fate?
- In which country is the yuan the standard monetary unit?
- Which peninsula contains much of Denmark?

Double Crossword

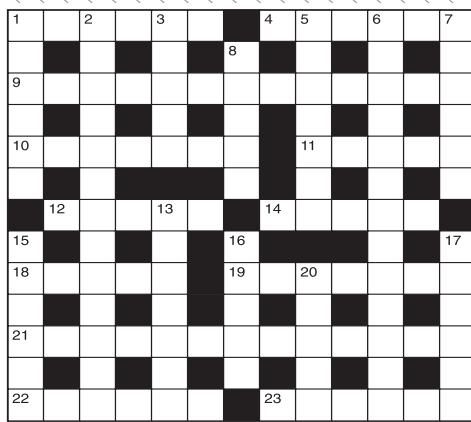
Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues: Across

- Woollen material for a head-dress the French sent back (6)
- They are used for securing a body of sailors in the ship (6)
- Properly managed, like a successful orchestra (4-9)
- Regarding a kind of glass (7)
- It's routine for the sailor to be included in strike (5)
- See 2 Down.
- A prison in a state of agitation (5)
- One in dole confusion reduced the friction (5)
- Water container for one who puts up a tent (7)
- Country clothes? (8,5)
- Skewers, we hear, for pieces of meat (6)
- Criticises what may be used for house cover (6)

Down

- In addition, a toff! (2,4)
- & 12 Across. Use every device when playing the organ! (4,3,3,3,5)
- Plants displaying a bit of xerophytic activity (5)
- PUTS in a form of words - they are used for lying (7)
- Number of staff allowed for the household (13)
- Awkwardly seated but staidly composed (6)
- At home, I leave Jones, the architect (5)
- Grazing land providing something soft near the harbour (7)
- Spikes will cause a broken piston (6)
- Use a rose for a cluster of flowers (5)
- Decisive events will produce an increase in the Civil Service (6)
- Answered (7)
- Unsuitable (13)
- Stretch (6)
- Abandon (6)



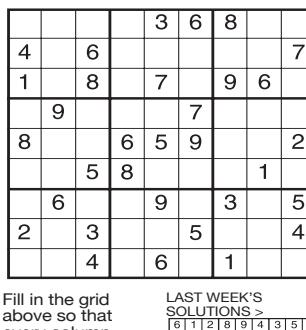
Quick Clues: Across

- Cotton cloth (6)
- Impede (6)
- Holding irrational beliefs (13)
- Friendly (7)
- Christmas hymn (5)
- Adhere (5)
- Stanza (5)
- Plunder (5)
- Answered (7)
- Unsuitable (13)
- Stretch (6)
- Abandon (6)

Down

- Careless (6)
- Actually (2,5,2,4)
- Pulsate (5)
- Object (7)
- Defer action (13)
- Outcome (6)
- Scatter (5)
- Make less expensive (7)
- Achieve success (6)
- Earlier (5)
- Coming (6)
- Cleanse (5)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >
1 1 2 8 9 4 3 5 7
5 8 7 1 2 3 6 4 9
9 3 4 5 7 6 2 8 1
4 5 3 2 8 1 9 7 6
1 2 8 7 6 9 4 3 5
7 9 6 4 3 5 1 2 8
8 7 1 6 4 2 5 9 3
2 6 9 3 5 7 8 1 4
3 4 5 9 1 8 7 6 2

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Out of service; 7 Sided; 8 Incur; 9 Use; 10 Chameleon; 11 Petard; 12 Gemini; 15 Hard lines; 17 Lac; 18 Amuse; 19 Ivory; 21 Person of note. Down: 1 One jump ahead; 2 Fed; 3 Endear; 4 Voiceless; 5 Cache; 6 Frankincense; 7 Sheet; 10 Carollers; 13 Inlay; 14 Ensign; 16 Rouse; 20 Off.
QUICK - Across: 1 Straight away; 7 Swell; 8 Preen; 9 Tie; 10 Propagate; 11 Option; 12 Limpid; 15 Inspiring; 17 Arc; 18 Globe; 19 Haven; 21 Protestation.
Down: 1 Shortcomings; 2 Ire; 3 Hollow; 4 Appealing; 5 Arena; 6 Interdiction; 7 Sweet; 10 Prominent; 13 Plain; 14 Sights; 16 Spoor; 20 Via.

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

53169 gives a family member,
423 gives a second family member,
7538 gives a third family member.

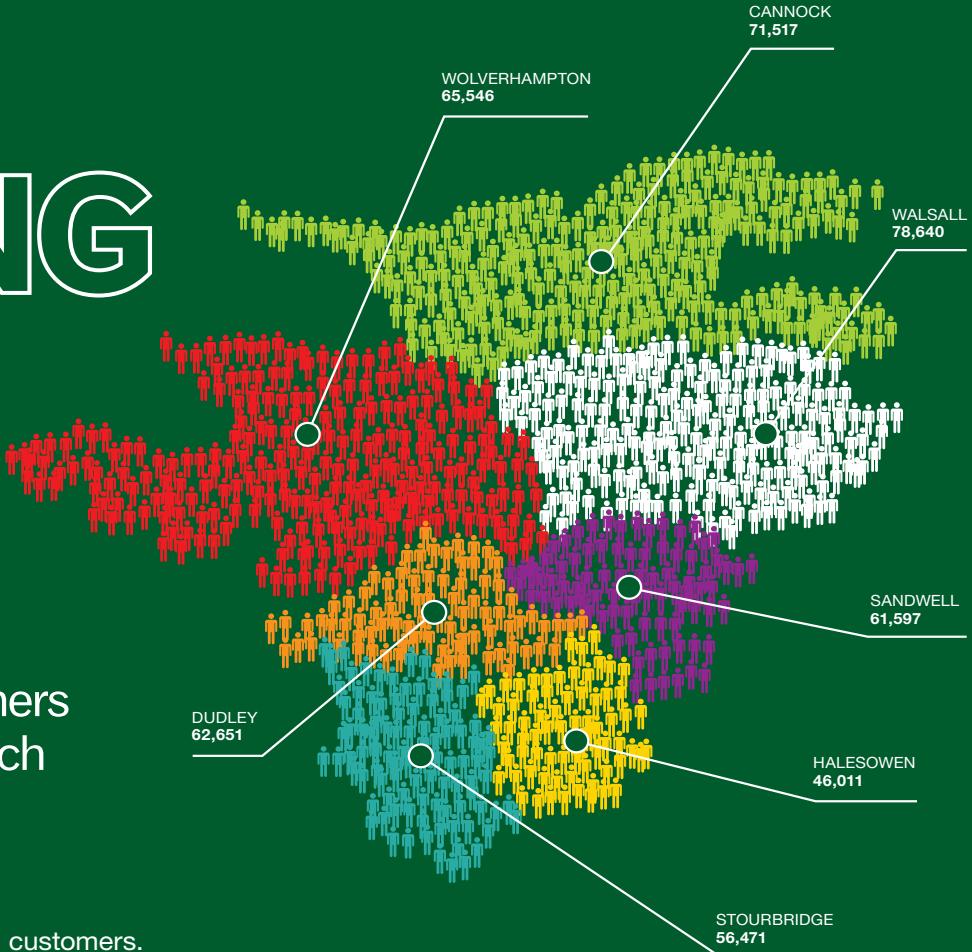
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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I could barely believe my eyes!

WE peered out through the window of the hide and waited. This was the heart of brown bear territory in eastern Finland, close to the Russian border.

Our extended weekend break had taken us to Europe's last great wilderness to re-connect with nature. We didn't have to wait long. Within minutes, a dark lumbering figure emerged from the forest of ancient pines into the marshland before us, sniffing the peaty earth and glancing cautiously around.

Within moments a second bear loped onto the scene, followed by a third. "Bears are very shy creatures," said our host Kari, who runs the nearby Boreal Wildlife Centre where we were to stay the night. "They spend their time deep in the forest away from humans. It would be very rare to experience one while hiking. You have to come to the hide."

ODOUR

Reassuring news for someone who was planning a six-mile forest hike the following day.

The hides are fitted with very tall flues to expel the odour of humans high above the bears' nostrils. The furious clicking of cameras from my fellow wildlife watchers didn't seem to faze this trio, and our excitement was palpable as they moved closer to the hide and began sniffing around in the muddy glop just a few metres away.

We were close enough to smell their strong musky odour, see their battle scars and massive paws. The biggest of the bears glanced up, seemingly meeting my gaze. I felt like I had met royalty. Forest royalty. Back at base camp on the edge of Lake Viiksimo, we tucked into a hearty salmon stew and chatted to a couple of renowned wildlife photographers who regularly visit Boreal Wildlife Centre for shoots. Wild Taiga, the region

Early autumn is a great time to see wild bears



The privately-owned lakeside Kalevala Hotel



where we were staying, is not just home to brown bears. Wolves, wolverine, elk, wild reindeer, golden eagles and capercaille all roam this vast wilderness. Kari regaled us with tales of the forest until late into the evening.

It's not hard to see why Lonely Planet places Finland as the third best travel destination in the world. It is the world's cleanest and greenest country, according the Environmental Performance Index. Its air is among the purest on the planet and the water so clean you can drink straight from most of its lakes. It has a population of barely six million, yet covers an area larger than

France. It is 70 per cent forest. Nature-loving Finns have learned to live off the land and this is reflected in their culture. The right to roam – known as Everyman's Right – is set in law and means you can walk, ski, cycle or ride freely in all natural areas, even if they are privately owned.

We had arrived in Finland the day before our bear adventure. The connecting flight from Helsinki to Kajaani in the Kainuu region was by prop aircraft, a clue we were travelling somewhere remote. As I stepped off the plane, the pure, clear night air filled my

lungs – and a far cry from the polluted haze I had left behind in London just a few hours ago. Our taxi flashed past countless shimmering black lakes and the dark silhouette of limitless pine forests. It was midnight when we arrived at our first port of call, the lakeside Kalevala Hotel in Kuhmo.

Pulling back the curtains the next day, was the first of many breathtaking moments of our four-day trip. The view was spectacular. A vast lake sparkled in the early morning sun, surrounded by ancient pines as far as the eye could see. A treat not to be missed. KIM BENNETT

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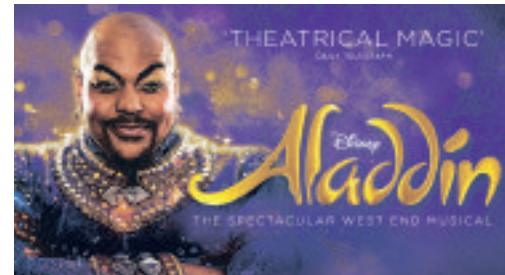
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Improved detached modern family home is well maintained and deceptively spacious

A modern detached house with well maintained and improved four-bedroomed accommodation in Jews Lane, Upper Gornal, Dudley, is for sale through Wakeman Estate Agents at £245,000.

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hall, a cloakroom/WC, a lounge, a dining room, a kitchen, a store, a utility area, a bedroom one with an en-suite shower room, three further bedrooms, a bathroom, gardens,

UPPER GORNAL £245,000

parking and a garage. The home lies in a pleasant and convenient location midway between Dudley and Sedgley.

It offers deceptively spacious and well maintained family accommodation.

This is attractively presented and

includes double glazing and gas central heating. In more detail the lounge has a bow window and a fireplace housing a living flame fire. An archway leads to a dining room.

The kitchen was refitted in around 2015. It includes a New World gas oven, Creda five-ring gas hob with extractor hood over, part tiled walls and plumbing for a dishwasher.

To book a viewing, call 01384 459999 or visit www.wakeman-online.com



Ideal investment or first time buyer's home is well proportioned, well presented and improved

An ideal first home or investment property in Dudley Road, Sedgley, Dudley, is well presented and improved.

It is for sale through Wakeman at £114,950 with no chain.

It has well proportioned three bedroom accommodation.

This briefly comprises two living rooms, a lobby, a kitchen, first floor landing, two first floor bedrooms, a bathroom and a second floor attic bedroom and a rear garden.

SEDGLEY £114,950

It is situated in a popular residential area between Sedgley and Upper Gornal and convenient for a wide range of amenities.

The bathroom is positioned at first floor and has been re-fitted to include a Jacuzzi bath and the ground floor kitchen has been enlarged and has an extensive

range of units including integrated appliances.

In more detail the living room has a feature fireplace. The lobby has an under-stairs storage, the rear living room has a gas fire in a wooden surround.

The kitchen has an integrated fridge freezer, microwave, oven, hob and dishwasher.

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Naseby Drive, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2HJ £1,200 pcm+ Fees

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Segbourne Road, Rubery, Birmingham, B45 2HJ £995 pcm+ Fees

A spacious 3 bedroom semi detached home, fully refurbished. The property is double glazed, centrally heated and has accommodation to comprise a reception hall, through lounge /diner, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, family bathroom, enclosed rear garden off road parking and a garage. EPC: B

Grange Road, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2HJ £995 pcm+ Fees

A deceptively spacious detached family with many character features, entrance hallway with parquet flooring, large lounge with multi fuel burner, separate dining room, fitted kitchen, utility, 3 double bedrooms, large refitted bathroom, private long rear garden, large detached garage with electric roller door, gas central heating, double glazed, EPC: E

Causey Farm Road, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2HJ £950 pcm+ Fees

This semi-detached property is situated in a quiet cul-de-sac in this very desirable location & consists of 2 reception rooms • sun room leading to a beautiful mature south facing private garden, kitchen, downstairs w.c, south facing rear garden, 3 good size bedrooms, master en-suite & fitted wardrobes, family bathroom, gas central heating & double glazed. A large corner plot with garage & driveway parking. A

Racemeadow Crescent, Netherton, West Midlands, DY2 0HJ £925 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE, DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• A lovely modern 3 bedroom detached house in a popular area close to schools and transport links. With entrance hall, large lounge, separate dining room, kitchen with appliances, downstairs w.c., south facing rear garden, 3 good size bedrooms, master en-suite & fitted wardrobes, family bathroom, gas central heating & double glazed. A large corner plot with garage & driveway parking. A

Toys Lane, Colley Gate, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2HJ £995 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE •• This 3 storey 1880's victorian town house, ideally located for bus routes to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Merry Hill, close to local shops and situated in the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School. Comprising of: Two reception rooms, large fitted kitchen, 3 double bedrooms, master bedroom with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B

Summerfields Avenue, Hurst Green, Halesowen, West Midlands, B62 2TJ

Ideally located in Hurst Green, close to popular school, motorway access and commutable to Birmingham, is this lovely semi-detached home, briefly comprising of: 2 large bedrooms and 1 single box room, large rear reception room, front reception room, modern fitted kitchen with white goods, family bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens, driveway parking and garage, unperfmed. EPC: E

Wychbury Road, Brierley Hill, DY5 6JZ £675 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• This lovely semi detached house is Ideally located for Merry Hill, Thorns College and local primary schools. Featuring a extended lounge & kitchen, dining area, 3 good bedrooms, house bathroom with shower, tandem garage, front and rear gardens, central heating and double glazing. EPC: D

Sanderson Place, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2HJ £650 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE, DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• Luxury living in Hayley Green. A superb ground floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen and diner, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B

Dudley Road, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 6HJ £650 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE, DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• A 2 bedroom detached bungalow in this very convenient residential area. The property is well presented throughout & bathroom this property offers a large lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, bathroom with shower, 2 good size bedrooms, gas central heating, front & rear garden, garage & driveway. EPC: D

College Road, Quinton, Birmingham, B32 6HJ £650 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE, DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• Traditional 2 bedroom terraced house in a very desirable & convenient location close to local amenities. The property is well presented throughout & bathroom this property has a large front reception room, large kitchen with dining area, utility room, downstairs w.c., private rear garden. Upstairs there are 2 good size bedrooms & a modern family bathroom with separate corner shower. Not to be

Brett Young Close, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2HJ £650 pcm+ Fees

An impressive 2nd floor apartment within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre. This modern apartment features 2 double bedrooms, a large open plan lounge/kitchen/bathroom with separate corner shower. Not to be

Greenfield Ave, Cradley Heath, West Midlands, B65 0HJ £995 pcm+ Fees

Fully refurbished semi detached house not to be missed. Large corner plot situated within walking distance of Cradley Heath Train Station and Cradley Town Centre. Featuring 1 reception room, well fitted kitchen/diner, utility room, house bathroom with shower, also driveway

Blakelaw Road, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 6HJ £650 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• A very nicely presented 1st floor apartment situated in this very popular location close to Halesowen Town Centre. Featuring hallway, large lounge with stunning views, kitchen with oven/hob & integratedridge/freezer, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom & shower. The property further benefits from gas central heating & double glazed throughout and a garage en-bloc, own rear garden. EPC: C

Briery Close, Cradley Heath, West Midlands, B64 5HJ £995 pcm+ Fees

Recently refurbished is this 3 bedroom semi detached family home in this popular residential area. Briefly comprising of 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms, front & rear garden. On road parking. Ideal for Timbertree Primary School. EPC: D

Purin Wharf, Netherton, Dudley, West Midlands, DY2 0HJ £950 pcm+ Fees

A very presentable unfurnished top floor apartment on this popular development overlooking the canal featuring 2 double bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob and washer/dryer, master bedroom with en-suite, family bathroom with shower, double glazing, electric storage heating, one allocated parking space. Viewing highly recommended. Available immediately. EPC: C

Delingpole Walk, Cradley Heath, West Midlands, B64 5SJ £650 pcm+ Fees

Located on a popular development, close to local train station is this unfurnished, mid news house, briefly comprising: gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, downstairs w.c., 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, rear garden, garage. EPC: C

Tenterfields, Halesowen, B63 4HJ £495 pcm+ Fees

A superb 1st floor flat in central Halesowen with parking space. This lovely apartment features a lovely lounge, fitted kitchen (no white goods), bathroom with shower, double bedroom, gas central heating, communal garden. EPC: D

Norwood Road, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, DY5 2HJ £950 pcm+ Fees

An unfurnished end terraced house, close to local shops and not far from Merry Hill Shopping Centre. This large house features a lovely living room, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing, rear garden, on road parking. EPC: E

Somers Road, Halesowen, West Midlands, B62 3HJ £950 pcm+ Fees

•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER •• A 1 bedroom 1st floor studio apartment close to Halesowen Town Centre, offering generous accommodation which includes new carpets, featuring lounge with open plan kitchen, bedroom with en-suite shower room, double glazing, communal garden, on road parking, unfurnished. EPC: G

Eagle House, Lye, West Midlands, DY9 2BZ £950 pcm+ Fees

A 1 floor studio apartment in the centre of Lye Town, also close for Lye Train Station. Featuring a combined lounge/bedroom, fitted kitchen with electric cooker, shower room, electric heater, shared laundry room, parking at rear, private communal area with seating. EPC: E

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, November 9, 2017

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AMANDA, 36yrs, attractive lady. Solvent and well educated and sponsered. Feminine figure with large breasts. Hoping to meet a broad-minded gent, any age for discreet relationship. I don't mind if you are married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box: 426853

FEMALE, 67, smoker, enjoys music, TV, meals out/in, looking for male 68-75 for friendship maybe more. Text only replies. Mailbox: 5877942

YAZ, Asian lady, 32yrs, very slim and pretty. Hoping to meet a strong minded, dominant, resourceful man. Mature please 45+ Text Only. Box: 417484

SUE, 44, country loving lady, tall, slim, looking for similar country gent to share adventures in the great outdoors with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429251

SOPHIE, 46yrs, attractive professional lady with time on her hands. Hoping to meet a nice gent of any age, text fun, first possible meeting. Text Only. Box: 41626579

ELIZABETH, 45, fed up with lonely nights! Blonde blue eyed, no childrens, WLTM someone for cosy nights in and TLC. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429221

SARAH black lady, works as a nurse. 48yrs young, hoping to meet a younger man for some fun. Let me be your couger and dress me up in my uniform. Text Only. Box: 4166063

SHARON, 48, tall slim attractive, lives alone with no ties, love romanticising and WLTM man for good times together, maybe more. Any age. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429125

KATHLEEN, attractive lady. 58yrs. Blue-eyed Brunette with a nice figure. I love life and want a nice gent to share it with me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429047

MELANIE, attractive lady, 38yrs, hoping to meet a nice chap, any age, for chats, not complicated times. Must have great soh, looks unimportant. Text Only. Box: 4037147

SYLVIA, 44yrs, curly bushy build. Very respectful. Hoping to meet a good man to love. Call to hear more, I've lots to tell you. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429301

TINA, 58yrs, slim, passionate and kind. Loves eating out. Hoping to meet gent 55-63. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429167

GEORGINA, 46yrs, sophisticated professional lady (teacher), quite firm but kind! Interested in finding out more? I am interested to chat to you so call me today. Text Only. Box: 4151593

JANE, 49yrs, own home, loves nature, artistic. Love to socialise. WLTM gent any age, must have GSOH. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429165

ANGELA, 48yrs, seeks no strings casual fun. I have my own house, car and am solvent. I'm busty with a firm figure. You must be open minded, age/status unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3015 Box: 427633

NANCY, 40 something years young. Attractive, fun loving and kind. Hoping to meet gent for trips, particularly around Cornwall which I love. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429037

PAULINE, Sincere lady, 70s, GSOH, OH&C. Curvy with shoulder length dark hair. Varied interests, theatre and travel. WLTM similar minded gent. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 428977

SAMANTHA, 35yrs, attractive Brunette with own business, seeks adventurous gent for casual relationship. Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box: 425979

CAROLINE, 42yrs, well educated, sophisticated "some call me posh" married lady, looking for no strings midweek liaisons. Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box: 427533

ATTRACTIVE, lady, 44yrs, easygoing, solvent with OHAC. If you are down to earth and loving call me. Age/looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429041

HARRIETT, 42yrs, blue eyed Brunette with long legs and decent curves! Looking for a cheeky adventurous man for fun only. I live alone so can accommodate and can travel. Discretion assured. ACA. Give me a try. Tel: 0906 515 3031 Box: 426205

ATTRACTIVE lady, 70yrs young, slim, fit and young for my age. I'm hoping to meet a kind gent must have GSOH, age/looks unimportant. Must be smart and good company. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 429039

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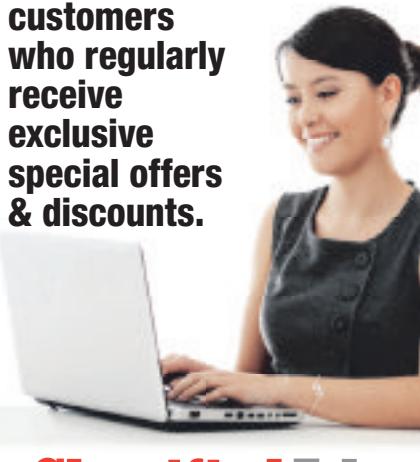
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It's a chunky five-seat SUV with handsome imposing looks

Ford Edge makes its presence well-known on the open road

By Dave Brown

You certainly feel in command of the road in our long-term Ford Edge. It's a car that's not to be messed with.

A chunky five-seat SUV with handsome, imposing looks, it tells other road users: "I'm in charge and I'm not to be messed with."

I've found this to be the case in all sorts of driving environments lately. I'm the last person you would describe as aggressive behind the wheel, dutifully adhering to 70mph speed limits on deserted midnight motorways, and always being ultra-patient with the learner drivers who seem to spend every rush-hour bimbling along the lanest.

But other road users do seem to be somewhat in awe of EG17FKH. Fellow motorway drivers move left even if I'm approaching them from behind only very gradually, and those slow-moving learners do seem to be inclined to turn off if their instructors can see me in their rear-view mirrors. I'm not complaining, of course. If people are moving out of my way – and, true, it could all be in my imagination – it means the Edge is being noticed. And if nothing else, that's excellent news as far as my safety is concerned, as well as that of my passengers.



The Edge has front, rear and side sports bodystyling

So from the outside, yes, the Edge ticks all the boxes, and as well as that general air of dominance, our car stands out for other reasons.

It boasts front, rear and side sports bodystyling with dark exterior detailing, and snazzy 20-inch platinum grey alloy wheels. A rear spoiler helps to make the back view easy on the eye. All good.

Inside, however, I think it's a slightly different story. Sure, everything the driver needs is close at hand, easy to operate, and sensibly laid out.

And the kit list is impressive, including a Sony DAB navigation system with 12 speakers, alloy pedals, a rear-view camera and a 'Quickclear' heated front windscreen. An intelligent all-wheel drive system can determine how much grip, cornering balance and responsiveness is required in wet, dry or icy conditions and on varying terrain. Definitely a useful feature for more adventurous buyers.

It's just that whenever I get into a car for the first time – and I'd never driven a Ford Edge until a couple of weeks ago – I'm looking for the nifty design touch that catches my eye; something a little different – quirky, even – that raises a smile, and makes you think to yourself, "I really like that". I must confess, I didn't really find one in this car. What does help lift the mood, however, is our model's panoramic roof with sunshade. It's part of the ST-Line Lux Pack which adds £1,275 to the base price.

And as far as general levels of comfort are concerned, I've no complaints whatsoever. Impressive amounts of interior space will mean no-one will moan about feeling cramped and it's easy to find the perfect driving position.

Something else that helps make the Edge a pleasure to pilot and which is definitely worth a mention is active noise control. Microphones detect and measure specific sound waves while a control unit can separate the noises you do want to hear, such as conversation and the radio (Absolute 80s every time, please), from those you don't. The system then creates inaudible 'white noise' to cancel out any unwelcome sounds, and provide you with a real sense of tranquillity when you're driving. Clever stuff!

So how much will an Edge set you back? Well, a standard model will mean you'll be parting with almost £40,000 while our car, an ST-Line example with extras such as active steering, a front wide-view camera and adaptive cruise control with pre-collision assist, comes in at nearly £43,000.

You certainly get a lot for your money though – so if you're in the market for a substantial SUV that's not short on safety features and useful tech, this is a car that could definitely have the edge.

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Steve Bull and chairman Dave Maydew with Olivia Green, Ella Green, Liam Bailey and Olivia Grainger



Diane Cook, James Newman, chairman Maydew and Rebecca Harris at the opening of the new pavilion



Inside the Bilbrook Juniors' changing rooms



The impressive £850,000 development

New facilities enable life to begin at 40 for club

SPORTING FEATURE

By Matt Maher

"We had to put our case forward. At times it felt like we were moving one step forward and then two back."

THE building of an £850,000 new facility has a football club believing they can prove life begins at 40.

Bilbrook Juniors fielded their first team back in 1978 and will next year enter the fifth decade stronger than ever thanks to the new state-of-the-art pavilion at their Penderford Lane home which features changing rooms, a clubhouse and bar.

Constructed with the aid of grants from the Premier League, the FA and Wolverhampton City Council, it has club members hailing a new dawn.

"The club has been in existence for nearly 40 years but in many ways this is the starting point," said chairman Dave Maydew.

Reality

"Having a facility like this has been a long-term goal and it has taken the hard work of too many people to mention in order to make it a reality."

"But in many ways the big job starts now. Until now all the money has gone into keeping the club going. Now we are in a position where we can start giving back."

The new facility is the result of a decade-long campaign and replaces the club's previous clubhouse, which had fallen into a state of disrepair.

It was made possible thanks to a £484,529 grant from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund, which is delivered by the Football Foundation. Wolverhampton City Council also contributed £350,000



Bilbrook Juniors Under-11s East are one of the many teams to wear the club colours

which already fields 31 teams at all age levels in a variety of regional leagues, including a ladies team.

In total Bilbrook have around 1,500 members including players, coaches and volunteers.

Future plans will see the construction of flood-lights which should allow Bilbrook's mens team, who currently play in Division One of the West Midlands League, to further climb the non-league pyramid.

The facility is also set to benefit both the community and other clubs. Otter and Vixen FC and Gornal Colts will also use the site, while Wolves Community Trust are set to deliver training and community outreach programmes.

"It is not just for the club but for the community too, particularly for the children," said Maydew.

"There is now a facility which can host functions. The old clubhouse was a drain on us. No-one wanted to go in but we were still paying for the gas and the electric.

"That is money which can now be reinvested into the club and help us build toward the future."

"In many ways this feels like a new beginning."

Globetrotters tour to stop off in Brum

THE world famous Harlem Globetrotters will bring their spectacular show to Birmingham next year during their 2018 World Tour.

The players have shot hoops with President Obama, played with Manchester United and much more. And they will be showing off their skills at the Genting Arena on May 18.

The Globetrotters recently wrapped up a busy 90th year tour, during which they named Pope Francis the ninth Honorary Harlem Globetrotter in team history, walked the runway at New York Fashion week, launched the Great Assist initiative alongside Robin Roberts - whom the team also named an honorary Harlem Globetrotter - pledging to spread 100 million smiles over the next 10 years, broke seven Guinness World Records® and remixed the team's legendary theme song, "Sweet Georgia Brown," with the help of Grammy Award-winning producer/songwriter Teddy Riley.

The Harlem Globetrotters® are legendary worldwide, synonymous with one-of-a-kind family entertainment and great basketball skills.

Speedway bosses to hold key talks

WOLVERHAMPTON Speedway have lined up a couple of key winter dates for fans. With the AGM of all promoters fast approaching, the club will be hosting a winter talk-in at the Cleveland Arms on Stow Heath Lane, close to Monmore, on Monday, November 27.

Representatives from the club management will be on hand to discuss developments and the impact decisions will have on Parrys International Wolves team building. The event is expected to start at 8pm.

Meanwhile, the traditional pre-Christmas season ticket day has been arranged for the stadium on Saturday, December 2, between 9.30am-1.30pm with the usual big turnout expected.

In Birmingham Brummies star Liam Carr announced his shock decision to quit speedway at the club's end-of-season presentation on Saturday. The 21-year-old broke the news after picking up three awards as he told fans 'that's me done'.

Matches switched for live TV coverage

TWO Wolves games and three Villa matches have been switched for live broadcast on Sky Sports.

Wolves now head to Sheffield Wednesday on Friday, December 15 (7.45pm) instead of the following day.

Their trip to Bristol City on December 30 is now a 5.30pm kick-off too. As a result of that game being later, the visit of Brentford has been moved back to January 2 (7.45pm, not on TV).

Villa's home game against Sheffield United on December 23 has been put back to 5.30pm. The trip to Brentford on Boxing Day is now a 7.30pm start and the match at Nottingham Forest on January 15 has been changed to a 5.30pm kick-off.

Even the lower divisions are finding their fixture list tweaked for television. Walsall took a break from their League One campaign on Saturday when they took on Newport County away in the FA Cup. The match was shown live on S4C with a 5.15pm kick-off.

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Colts are the star turn for Old Hales

Old Hales 0 Peterborough Lions 90
THIS Midland Premier fixture was a seriously challenging outing for the young Halesonians team who continue to be riddled with injuries.

The early exchanges saw Hales competing well in the tight play with the set scrummage equal throughout most of the game. However, further injuries to Tom King and Kieran Haynes and a yellow card for promising back-row Craig Howells only compounded the issues. The visitors were too strong in all areas and easy winners.

Luctonians 2nds 40 Old Hales 2nds 5

With injury and unavailability continuing to make selection difficult, a squad varying in age from teenagers to 40 plus went over to take on Luctonians. Old Hales started poorly allowing Lucts to take a commanding 21-0 lead. As the half progressed Old Hales became more competitive but couldn't prevent Lucts adding a further score before the break, 28-0.

Hales started the second half well and after recovering the ball from kick off went through the phases with the forwards edging ever closer to the Lucts line before centre Craig Jukes crashed over to score.

Hales regained possession and hit back straight away. The remainder of the half was dominated by the defences. The final play of the game saw Hales break away for the final score of the game.

Harborne 2nds 30 Old Hales 3rds 5

Hales third XV took the pitch with more than a few players in unfamiliar positions. A blistering run from Ian Smith followed by a well timed pass saw Connor Leahy bulldoze over from a few metres out. This was to be the only score from the visitors.

S'bridge 29 Old Hales Colts 49

All players gave notable performances against Stourbridge with tries from Dan Smith (hat-trick), Dan Corcoran, Thomas Henry, Josh Woodward, Rhys Arthur, Luke Willets and Joe Yarnall.

Sibling successes at the aquathlon

AT the weekend some of the Black Country Triathlete juniors came home with medals at the Burntwood Aquathlon.

It was a family effort for both the girls and boys. Sisters Scarlett and Sydney Williams both came home in first place in the TS1 and TS3 age groups and brothers Ben and Tom Lucas finished 3rd and 5th in the TS2 age group.

There was one adult entry from BCT with Lucy McNeil-Briggs finishing in 33:39 following a 7:44 400m swim and a 25:25 5km run placing her fifth in the Open Age group.

Other club athletes are preparing themselves for the annual BCT Splash n'Dash aquathlon which will be held on December 3 at Ounsdale Leisure Centre, Wombourne. Entries are open on line at www.entrycentral.co.uk for both adults and juniors.

CRADLEY Heathens bosses have accused rider Richard Hall of showing 'utter contempt' for the club after he missed the Golden Hammer.

Hall had also missed the Heathens' final league meeting of the season against Eastbourne, having notified the Heathens his season was over through injury and announcing it on social media.

He did appear for Belle Vue Colts as a guest in the National League on October

20, scoring 15+1, and then for Glasgow in the Premier League on the Friday, netting 8+1, and was expected to ride at the prestigious event.

He did not show up and co-promoter Gary Patchett said: "Golden Hammer. Hall told us that, providing he had no reaction to riding on Friday he would take his place.

"However, despite his assurance and extensive efforts to contact him over the

weekend Richard Hall did not appear. He didn't even tell us he wasn't coming and by Sunday evening after he'd ignored our numerous attempts to make contact with him we took steps to cover his absence.

"We know now he had no intention of taking part.

"In our opinion, Richard Hall has made a mockery of the National League and shown nothing but utter contempt for this club and its supporters."



Richard Hall

Hall slammed over Hammer absence



Page 35

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Keeper Gould earns a point for Glassboys

Stourbridge 0 Witton Albion 0

STOURBRIDGE boss Gary Hackett admitted he made tactical mistakes in the disappointing goalless draw against Witton Albion.

The Glassboys were below par and had Matt Gould to thank for getting a point from the game against a fellow Evo-Stik Premier play-off contender.

Last season's top scorer Luke Benbow returned to the club on a short-term loan from Solihull Moors on Friday but the Glassboys didn't pose much of a threat.

Hackett said: "I didn't get it right tactically. I make mistakes as a manager.

"Let's be honest, we were very poor. The only saving grace is that when you play as poorly as we did you make sure you don't lose the game."

Hackett's side did start reasonably well and their best opportunity of the game arrived in the ninth minute but Leon Broadhurst saw his shot blocked after good work down the left by Luke Shearer.

Gould was first called into action just after the half hour mark and the keeper did well to deny Owen Dale before Prince Haywood fired wide from distance.

Witton took control of the game after the interval and almost went ahead in the 50th minute but defender Nick Ryan's back-post header was kept out by Gould.

The shot-stopper, whose father Jonathan is goalkeeping coach at West Brom, then did brilliantly to get down to winger Steven Tames' low effort.

Gould was once again called into action, denying James Foley from close range with five minutes left, leaving the Glassboys thankful for a point.

Meanwhile, Stourbridge has banned a number of supporters from matches after flares were set off and thrown onto the pitch.

The club has taken tough action against several fans who blighted games against rivals Halesowen Town.

A woman was injured during a league game when a flare was thrown while there were more unsavoury scenes in a Birmingham Senior Cup tie two weeks later on October 23.

Stourbridge said in a statement: "Following investigations, we can confirm that a number of people have been refused entry to the War Memorial Ground at subsequent matches, and the club is in the process of formally notifying these people of indefinite ban from all future matches at the War Memorial Ground."

YELTZ HOPES ARE PIC AXED

Rushall Olympic 3 Halesowen Town 1

GOALS from Richard Brodie, Wes Atkinson and Mathis Fonovich were enough to give Rushall Olympic three valuable points against Evo-Stik League Premier Division relegation rivals Halesowen Town.

After a quiet start to the game at Dales Lane, Jahquil Hill kept the Yeltz at bay with a fantastic save from Danny Udh on 33 minutes after the forward got in behind the home defence.

Brodie carried on where he left off by converting his second penalty in three games after being fouled inside the area by Asa Charlton on 38 minutes. The striker sent Danny Platt the wrong way to put Rushall into the lead.

The Yeltz got an instant reply, with Udh sliding in to nip the ball past Hill after a precise through ball found him 10 yards out on 41 minutes.

Pinpoint

The Pics were back in front three minutes later, when a pinpoint Danny Waldron cross from the right found Atkinson, who nodded home from close range.

Fonovich doubled the Pics' lead on 61 minutes with a fine finish. The Frenchman received the ball on the edge of the area before curling a sublime effort into the top corner to make it 3-1.

The Pics' defence stood strong for the rest of the game, with the Yeltz struggling to get a foothold as Rushall protected their lead manfully until full-time.

"It was a scrappy game," admitted Olympic manager Liam McDonald. "We knew what they would come with in terms of being a threat from set-pieces and on the counter attack."

"I was pleased with how hard we worked against a team who had good shape. We were not so great in the first half but after the break we were the better side and deserved the win."

Belting! Team strikes gold



With Jason Charlesworth are the successful CMA Villains team that stuck tournament gold

A PROUD kickboxing coach took his squad to the world championships and saw his charges win 15 medals.

Jason Charlesworth's team, known as CMA Villains, returned with 10 golds and five silvers.

Kiyra Charlesworth, Alfie Tromans, Mitchell Wood and Jacob Chance all picked up two golds apiece, as with Luke Ashby and Connor Moffitt also on the winner's podium.

There were two silvers each for Michael

Regan and Shannon Oxley and one Alex Warren. The Villains followed up in the World Open Weight Championship, where Oxley made amends to land the crown and Reuben Charlesworth won the Open Weight for the second year running.

More glory followed with a mixed team title. Jason said: "My guys all train hard and it pays off. We travel around Europe a lot and this was the icing on the cake."

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford.

Thursday, November 9, 2017

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Halesowen

INSIDE: YOUR REGULAR CHRONICLE

CHRONICLE



Thursday, November 9, 2017

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ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

HALESOWEN

Christmas lights

THE BIG SWITCH ON!
SATURDAY 18TH NOVEMBER
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MEET SANTA CLAUS - FREE FUN FAIR - FREE PARKING*
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STILT WALKERS - ACROBATICS - CAROLS FROM LOCAL CHOIRS
FESTIVE MARKET & EXCLUSIVE OFFERS FROM LOCAL STORES

*ACROSS ALL DMBC CAR PARKS





THE HALESOWEN BID IS HERE

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Every single one of us will play an instrumental role in shaping the future of Halesowen Town Centre which will inevitably affect the success of your business in the forthcoming future.

The BID Proposal set out a five year strategic plan, from 2017 – 2022; This will generate over £600,000 that will be spent on improving our great town centre and the surrounding areas. All the funds that businesses contribute will be spent on generating awareness and attracting shoppers, visitors and businesses to the town so that we can all prosper together.

Since 2005 BIDs have been appearing all over the UK resulting in positive change for more than 200 towns and cities. Over £300 million pounds of much needed funding has been generated as a result which has been used to make improvements to increase their appeal and profitability.

So what is a BID? A Business Improvement District (BID) is an initiative that is funded by the businesses located within the defined BID area. The revenue generated is managed by a BID Company, which is independent from the local governing body (Dudley MBC), which is invested in projects with the sole aim of generating more business for the companies involved.

These projects are in addition to any that DMBC are currently undertaking or planning, it is not instead of those undertakings or plans. BIDs establish baseline agreements with the local authority and other statutory service providers (Police, Fire etc.) regarding the current level of service provision in the area. As the BID projects are separately managed it means that they cannot be pulled at a later date if the funding is required elsewhere by the government, the money is completely protected. The net revenue generated is your money and will only be spent on the agreed projects outlined within this Business Plan.



(From Left) Steve Jones, Wayne Edwards (BID Chairman), Barry Wheeler & Eve O'Connor

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

• A Stronger Positive Image:

We aim to put Halesowen firmly on the map by developing a holistic approach to marketing the town. We will invest in high profile marketing projects to promote and encourage new businesses and key customer segments to attract more visitors. Telling the West Midlands and beyond what a great place Halesowen is to shop, do business, enjoy leisure and above all, and become a great place to locate your business.

• A Brighter More Attractive Place:

We will tackle the local environment and enhance the general appearance of Halesowen by offering a clean, safe and modern town centre to be enjoyed morning, noon and night.

• A Thriving Business Hub:

We wish to entice new businesses to choose Halesowen as their first choice business location by providing professional support in order to help them succeed, employ local people and to invest in our town.

• A Visitor Magnet: To organise and host events that enable Halesowen to create a reputation of being a fun, vibrant and an atmospheric town centre.

FIND US ONLINE

Website: www.halesowenbid.co.uk

Facebook: [Halesowen BID](#)

Twitter: [@halesowenbid](#)

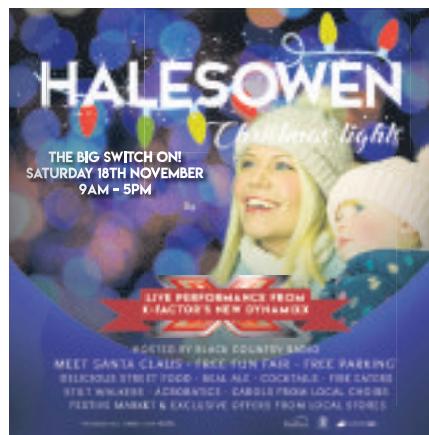
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CALL US

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Since launching in September...



The Halesowen Business Improvement District (BID) has been commended by other BID management teams for its fast approach in tackling issues faced by local businesses.

From its formation on the 1st September 2017, the Halesowen BID has immediately tackled high priority issues raised through a short survey posted on their website – www.halesowen-bid.co.uk. The speed in which the Halesowen BID has engaged in support activity for local businesses impressed BID managers from across the Midlands in a recent meeting.

Businesses across the town highlighted security, footfall and parking as the three major factors preventing a secure future for their business. In response to the issue of free parking, The Halesowen BID has formally written to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council requesting the recent 1-hour allocation of free parking to be extended to a minimum of 2-hours.

Security has also played a huge part of the BID's recent actions on behalf of Halesowen businesses. The BID is currently in discussion with the local police force regarding high levels of crime in and around the town centre.

The BID's online survey has provided businesses in Halesowen with an opportunity to give details on reported criminal activity over the past 12 months. The results of the survey will be used in talks with the local police on how to improve services for the town. In addition, the BID is also turning its attention to assisting individual businesses with the development of a security radio network working in partnership with The Cornbow Shopping Centre, set to be launched later this year.

Working with a view to increase visitors to the town, Halesowen BID recently partnered with local charity, Get A-Head, to run a 'Trick or Treat Trail' in the town. This event not only increased visitor retention in Halesowen, but also incentivised those taking part to visit shops which many admitted they had never previously been in to.

Furthermore, during the festive period, the BID will also work alongside the Halesowen Chamber of Trade in the annual Halesowen Christmas Lights Switch On by providing marketing and partnership support. The BID has also approached each food trader in the town for special offers to promote during the event, ensuring that visitors support our local businesses. Please find these special offers on the back page.

What do our local traders say?



Dean Ford, of Full Range Print Solutions, said:

"We have an opportunity, as a region, to invest a considerable amount of money in developing Halesowen. This investment will benefit all businesses, not just those located in the town centre".



Dave Dancer, of Dancers Halesowen, said:

"The BID can bring Halesowen's businesses together, we can create a network that can help businesses old and new not just survive, but thrive."

HALESOWEN

Christmas lights

SAT 18TH NOV · 12 - MID EVENING
EXCLUSIVE LOCAL OFFERS

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Baguette
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Baguette, Drink,
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Any regular hot
drink any cake
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Mini Fish & Chips
or
Any Pie & Chips
£3.50

*Available only on Saturday 18th November at the Christmas Lights Switch On